

Stowe, Harriet B.

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CONTEMPORARIES

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# Abraham Lincoln's Contemporaries

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
sources

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Harriet Beecher Stowe



HARRIET BEECHER STOWE IN 1853.

One year after "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was published.



Harriet Beecher Stowe



MRS. STOWE'S "UNCLE TOM" AT HOME IN KENTUCKY.



Century, Dec. 1857

ON the outskirts of the towns of central Kentucky, a stranger, searching for the picturesque in architecture and in life, would find his attention arrested by certain dense masses of low frame and brick structures, and by the denser multitudes of strange human beings that inhabit them. A single town may have on its edges several of these settlements, which are themselves called "towns," and bear separate names either descriptive of some topographical peculiarity or taken from the original owners of the lots. It is in these that a great part of the negro population of Kentucky has congregated since the war. Here to-day live the slaves of the past with their descendants; old family servants from the once populous country-places; old wagon-drivers from the deep-rutted lanes; old wood-choppers from the slaughtered blue-grass forests; old harvesters and plowmen from the long since abandoned fields; old cooks from the savory, wasteful kitchens; old nurses from the softly rocked and softly sung-to cradles. Here, too, are the homes of the younger generation, of the laundresses and the barbers, teachers and ministers of the Gospel, coachmen and porters, restaurant-keepers and vagabonds, hands from the hemp factories, and workmen on the outlying farms.

You step easily from the verge of the white population to the confines of the black. But it is a great distance — like the crossing of a vast continent between the habitats of alien races. The air seems all at once to tan the cheek. Out of the cold, blue recesses of the midsummer sky the sun burns with a fierceness of heat that warps the shingles of the pointed roofs and flares with blinding brilliancy against some whitewashed wall. Perhaps in all the street no little cooling stretch of shade. The unpaved sidewalks and the roadway between are but undistinguishable parts of a common thoroughfare, along which every upspringing green thing is quickly trodden to death beneath the ubiquitous play and passing of many feet. Here and there, from some shielded nook or other coign of vantage, a single plummy branch of bitter dog-fennel may be seen spreading its small firmament of white and golden stars close to the ground; or be-

tween its pale green stalks the faint lavender of the nightshade will take the eye as the sole emblem of the flowering world.

A negro town! Looking out the doors and windows of the cabins, lounging in the doorways, leaning over the low frame fences, gathering into quickly forming, quickly dissolving groups in the dusty streets, they swarm, they are here from milk-white through all deepening shades to glossy blackness; octoroons, quadroons, mulattoes — some with large liquid black eyes, refined features, delicate forms! working, gossiping, higgling over prices around a vegetable cart, discussing last night's church festival, to-day's funeral, or next week's railway excursion, sleeping, planning how to get work and how to escape it. From some unseen old figure in flamboyant turban, bending over the washtub in the rear of a cabin, comes a crooned song of indescribable pathos; behind a half-closed front shutter, a Moorish-hued *amoroso* in gay linen thrums his banjo in a measure of ecstatic gayety, preluding the more passionate melodies of the coming night. Here a fight; there the sound of the fiddle and the rhythmic patting of hands. Tatters and silks flaunt themselves side by side. Dirt and cleanliness lie down together. Indolence goes hand in hand with thrift. Superstition dogs the slow footsteps of reason. Passion and self-control eye each other all day long across the narrow way. If there is anywhere resolute virtue, all round it is a weltered muck of low and sensual desire. One sees all the surviving types of old negro life here crowded together with and contrasted with all the new phases of "colored" life — sees the transitional stage of a race, part of whom were born slaves and are now freemen, part of whom have been born freemen but remain so much like slaves.

It cannot fail to happen, as you walk along, that you will come upon some cabin set back in a small yard and half hidden, front and side, by an almost tropical jungle of vines and multiform foliage: patches of great sunflowers, never more leonine in tawny magnificence and sun-loving repose; festoons of white and purple morning-glories over the windows and up to the low eaves; around the porch and above the doorway, a trellis of gourd-vines swinging their long-necked, grotesque yellow fruit; about the entrance flaming hollyhocks and other brilliant bits of bloom, marigolds and petunias — evidences of the warm, native taste that still distinguishes



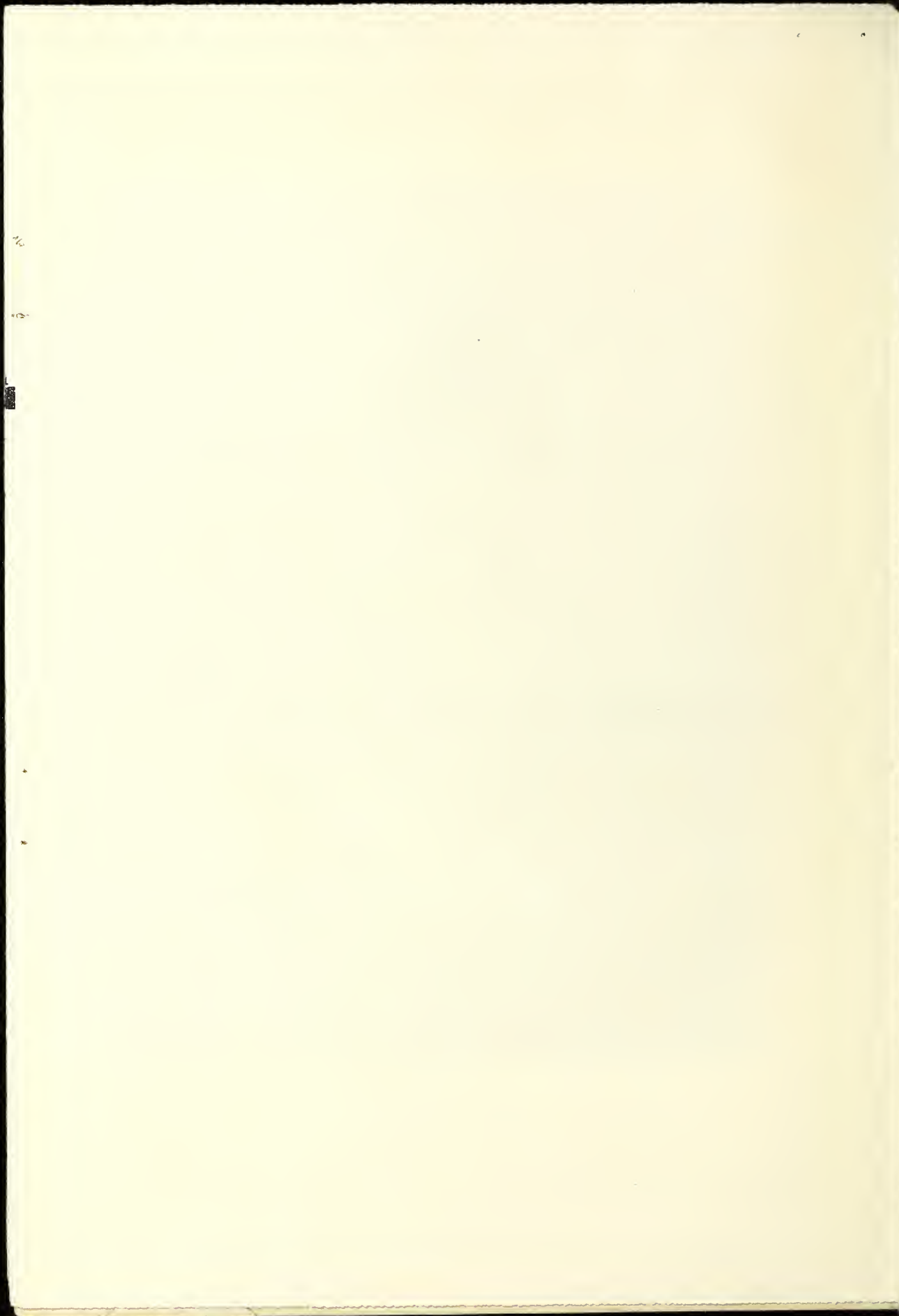


ENGRAVED BY T. JOHNSON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY SARONY.

*Harriet Beecher Stowe*







UNCLE TOM AT HOME.

the negro after some centuries of contact with the cold, chastened ideals of the Anglo-Saxon.

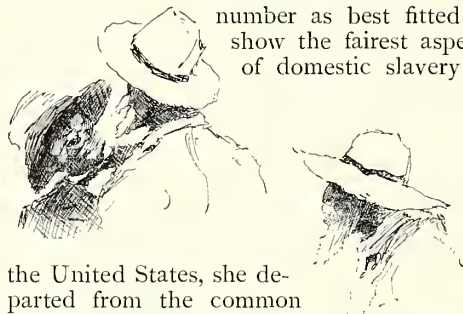
In the doorway of such a cabin, sheltered from the afternoon sun by his dense jungle of vines, but with a few rays of light glinting through the fluttering leaves across his seamed black face and white woolly head, the muscles of his once powerful arms shrunken, the gnarled hands folded idly in his lap,—his occupation gone,—you will haply see some old-

time slave of the class of Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom. For it is true that scattered here and there throughout the negro towns of Kentucky are representatives of the same class that furnished her with her hero; true, also, that they were never sold by their Kentucky masters to the plantations of the South, but remained unsold down to the last day of slavery.

When the war scattered the negroes of Kentucky blindly, tumultuously, hither and thither,



many of them gathered the members of their families about them and moved from the country into these "towns"; and here to-day the few survivors live, ready to testify of their relations with their former masters and mistresses, and indirectly serving to point a great moral: that, however justly Mrs. Stowe may have chosen one of their number as best fitted to show the fairest aspects of domestic slavery in



the United States, she departed from the common truth of history, as it respected their lot in life, when she condemned her Uncle Tom to his tragical fate. For it was not the *character* of Uncle Tom that she greatly idealized, as has been so often asserted; it was the category of events that were made to befall him.

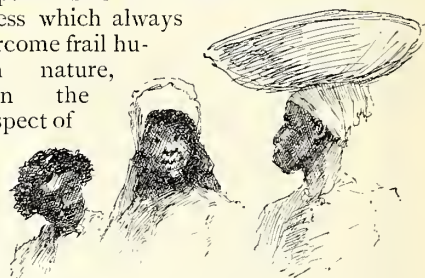
As citizens of the American Republic, these old negroes — now known as "colored gentlemen," surrounded by "colored ladies and gentlemen" — have not done a great deal. The bud of liberty was ingrafted too late on the ancient slave-stock to bear much fruit. But they are unspeakably interesting, as contemporaries of a type of Kentucky negro whose virtues and whose sorrows, dramatically embodied in literature, have become a by-word throughout the civilized world. And now that the war-cloud is lifting from over the landscape of the past, so that it lies still clear to the eyes of those who were once the dwellers amid its scenes, it is perhaps a good time to scan it and note some of its great moral landmarks before it grows remoter and is finally hidden by the mists of forgetfulness.



## II.

THESE three types — Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom, and the Sheldons, his master and mistress — were the outgrowth of natural and historic conditions peculiar to Kentucky. "Perhaps," wrote Mrs. Stowe in her novel, "the mildest form of the system of slavery is to be seen in the State of Kentucky. The general prevalence of agricultural pursuits of a quiet and gradual nature, not requiring those periodic seasons of hurry and

pressure that are called for in the business of more Southern districts, makes the task of the negro a more healthful and reasonable one; while the master, content with a more gradual style of acquisition, had not those temptations to hard-heartedness which always overcome frail human nature, when the prospect of



sudden and rapid gain is weighed in the balance with no heavier counterpoise than the interests of the helpless and unprotected." These words contain many truths.

For it must not be forgotten, first of all, that the condition of the slave in Kentucky was measurably determined by certain physical laws which lay beyond the control of the most inhuman master. Consider the nature of the country — elevated, rolling, without miasmatic districts or fatal swamps; the soil in the main slaveholding portions of the State, easily tilled, abundantly yielding; the climate, temperate and invigorating. Consider the system of agriculture — not that of vast plantations, but of small farms, part of which regularly consisted of woodland and meadow that required little attention. Consider the further limitations to this system imposed by the range of the great Kentucky staples — it being in the nature of corn, wheat, hemp, and tobacco, not to yield profits sufficient to justify the employment of an immense predial force, nor to require seasons of forced and exhausting labor. It is evident that under such conditions slavery was not stamped with those sadder features which it wore beneath a devastating sun, amid unhealthy or sterile regions of country, and through the herding together of hundreds of slaves who had the outward but not the inward discipline of an army. True, one recalls here the often quoted words of Jefferson on the raising of tobacco — words nearly as often misapplied as quoted; for he was considering the condition of slaves who were unmercifully worked on exhausted lands by a certain proletarian type of master, who did not feed and clothe them. Only under such circumstances could the culture of this plant be described as "productive of infinite wretchedness," and those engaged in it as "in a continual state of exertion beyond the powers of nature to support." It was by reason of these physical facts that slavery in Kentucky assumed the





THE MASTER.

phase which is to be distinguished as domestic; and it was this mode that had prevailed at the North and made emancipation easy.

Furthermore, in all history the condition of an enslaved race under the enslaving one has been partly determined by the degree of moral justification with which the latter has regarded the subject of human bondage; and the life of the Kentucky negro, say in the days of Uncle Tom, was further modified by the body of laws which had crystallized as the sentiment of the people, slaveholders them-

selves. But even these laws were only a partial exponent of what that sentiment was; for some of the severest were practically a dead letter, and the clemency of the negro's treatment by the prevailing type of master made amends for the hard provisions of others.

It would be a most difficult thing to write the history of slavery in Kentucky. It is impossible to write a single page of it here. But it may be said that the conscience of the great body of the people was always sensitive touch-



ing the rightfulness of the institution. At the very outset it seems to have been recognized simply for the reason that the early settlers were emigrants from slaveholding States and brought their negroes with them. The commonwealth began its legislation on the subject in the face of an opposing sentiment. By early statute restriction was placed on the importation of slaves, and from the first they began to be emancipated. Throughout the seventy-five years of pro-slavery State-life, the general conscience was always troubled.

The churches took up the matter. Great preachers, whose names were influential beyond the State, denounced the system from the pulpit, pleaded for the humane and Christian treatment of slaves, advocated gradual emancipation. One religious body after another



proclaimed the moral evil of it, and urged that the young be taught and prepared as soon as possible for freedom. Anti-slavery publications and addresses, together with the bold words of great political leaders, acted as a further leaven in the mind of the slaveholding class. As evidence of this, when the new constitution of the State

was to be adopted, thirty thousand votes were cast in favor of an open clause in it, whereby gradual emancipation should become a law as soon as the majority of the citizens should deem it expedient for the peace of society; and these votes represented the richest, most intelligent slaveholders in the State.

In general the laws were perhaps the mildest. Some it is vital to the subject in hand not to pass over. If slaves were inhumanly treated by their owner or not supplied with proper food and clothing, they could be taken from him and sold to a better master. This law was not inoperative. I have in mind the instance of a family who lost their negroes in this way, were socially disgraced, and left their neighborhood. If the owner of a slave had bought him on condition of not selling him out of the county, or into the Southern States, or so as to separate him from his family, he could be sued for violation of contract. This law shows the opposition of the better class of Kentucky masters to the slave-trade, and their peculiar regard for the family ties of their negroes. In the earliest Kentucky newspapers



will be found advertisements of the sales of negroes, on condition that they would be bought and kept within the county, or the State. It was within chancery jurisdiction to prevent the separation of families. The case may be mentioned of a master who was tried by his church for unnecessarily separating a husband from his wife. Sometimes slaves who had

been liberated and had gone to Canada voluntarily returned into service under their former masters. Lest these should be overreached, they were to be taken aside and examined by the court to see that they understood the consequences of their own action, and were free from improper constraint. On the other hand, if a slave had a right to his freedom, he could file a bill in chancery and enforce his master's assent thereto.

But a clear distinction must be made between the mild view entertained by the Kentucky slaveholders regarding the system itself and their dislike of the agitators of forcible and immediate emancipation. A community of masters, themselves humane to their negroes and probably intending to liberate them in the end, would yet combine into a mob to put down individual or organized antislavery efforts, because they resented what they regarded an interference of the abolitionist with their own affairs, and believed his measures inexpedient for the peace of society. Therefore, the history of the antislavery movement in Kentucky, at times so turbulent, must not be used to show the sentiment of the people regarding slavery itself.

III.

FROM these general considerations it is now possible to enter more closely upon a study of the domestic life and relations of Uncle Tom and the Shelys.

"Whoever







THE MAMMY.

visits some estates there," wrote Mrs. Stowe, "and witnesses the good-humored indulgence of some masters and mistresses and the affectionate loyalty of some slaves, might be tempted to dream of the oft-fabled poetic legend of a patriarchal institution." Along with these words, taken from "Uncle Tom's Cabin," I should like to quote an extract from a letter written me by Mrs. Stowe under date of April 30th, 1886:

"In relation to your letter, I would say that I never lived in Kentucky, but spent many years in Cincinnati, which is separated from Kentucky only by the Ohio

River, which, as a shrewd politician remarked, was dry one-half the year and frozen the other. My father was president of a theological seminary at Walnut Hills, near Cincinnati, and with him I traveled and visited somewhat extensively in Kentucky, and there became acquainted with those excellent slaveholders delineated in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' I saw many counterparts of the Shelys — people humane, conscientious, just, and generous, who regarded slavery as an evil and were anxiously considering their duties to the slave. But it was not till I had finally left the West, and my husband was settled as professor in Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, that the passage of the fugitive-slave law and the distresses that followed it drew this from me."



The typical boy on a Kentucky farm was tenderly associated from infancy with the negroes of the household and the fields. His old black "Mammy" became almost his first mother and was but slowly crowded out of his conscience and his heart by the growing image of the true one. She had perhaps nursed him at her bosom when he was not long enough to stretch across it, sung over his cradle at

lane on blooded alder-stalk horses, afterwards leading the exhausted coursers into stables of the same green bushes and haltering them high with a cotton string. It was one of these hatless children of original Guinea that had crept up to him as he lay asleep in the summer grass and told him where the best hidden of all nests was to be found in a far fence corner,—that of the high-tempered, scolding



"ON BLOODED ALDER-STALK HORSES."

noon and at midnight, taken him out upon the velvety grass beneath the shade of the elm-trees to watch his first manly resolution of standing alone in the world and walking the vast distance of some inches. Often, in boyish years, when flying from the house with a loud appeal from the incomprehensible code of Anglo-Saxon punishment for small misdemeanors, he had run to those black arms and cried himself to sleep in the lap of African sympathy. As he grew older, alas! his first love grew faithless; and while "Mammy" was good enough in her way and sphere, his wandering affections settled humbly at the feet of another great functionary of the household,—the cook in the kitchen. To him her keys were as the keys to the kingdom of heaven, for his immortal soul was his immortal appetite. When he stood by the biscuit bench while she, pausing amid the varied industries that went into the preparation of an old-time Kentucky supper, made him marvelous geese of dough, with farinaceous feathers and genuine coffee-grains for eyes, there was to him no other artist in the world who possessed the secret of so commingling the useful with the beautiful.

The little half-naked imps, too, playing in the dirt like glossy blackbirds taking a bath of dust, were his sweetest, because perhaps his forbidden, companions. With them he went clandestinely to the fatal duck-pond in the stable lot, to learn the art of swimming on a walnut rail. With them he raced up and down the

guinea-hen. To them he showed his first Barlow knife; for them he blew his first home-made whistle. He is their petty tyrant to-day; to-morrow he will be their repentant friend, dividing with them his marbles and proposing a game of hop-sotch. Upon his dialect, his disposition, his whole character, is laid the ineffaceable impress of theirs, so that they pass into the final reckoning-up of his life here and in the world to come.

But Uncle Tom!—the negro overseer of the place—the greatest of all the negroes—greater even than the cook, when one is not hungry. How often has he straddled Uncle Tom's neck, or ridden behind him afield on a barebacked horse to the jingling music of the trace-chains! It is Uncle Tom who plaits his hempen whip and ties the cracker in a knot that will stay. It is Uncle Tom who brings him his first young squirrel to tame, the teeth of which are soon to be planted in his right forefinger. Many a time he slips out of the house to take his dinner or supper in the cabin with Uncle Tom; and during long winter evenings he loves to sit before those great roaring cabin fireplaces that throw their red and yellow lights over the half circle of black faces and on the mysteries of broom-making, chair-bottoming, and the cobbling of shoes. Like the child who listens to "Uncle Remus," he too hears songs and stories, and creeps back to the house with a wondering look in his eyes and a vague hush of spirit.

Then come school-days and vacations dur-



THE COOK.

ing which, as Mrs. Stowe says, he may teach Uncle Tom to make his letters on a slate or expound to him the Scriptures. Then, too, come early adventures with the gun, and 'coon hunts and 'possum hunts with the negroes under the round moon, with the long-eared, deep-voiced hounds—to him delicious and ever-memorable nights! The crisp air, through which the breath rises like white incense, the thick autumn leaves, begemmed with frost, rustling underfoot; the shadows of the mighty trees; the strained ear; the heart leaping with excitement; the negroes

and dogs mingling their wild delight in music that wakes the echoes of distant hillsides. Away! Away! mile after mile, hour after hour, to where the purple and golden persimmons hang low from the boughs, or where from topmost limbs the wild grape drops its countless clusters in a black cascade a sheer two hundred feet.

But now he is a boy no longer, but has his first love-affair, which sends a thrill through all those susceptible cabins; has his courtship, which gives rise to many a wink and innuendo; and brings home his bride, whose



coming converts every youngster into a living rolling ball on the ground, and opens the feasts and festivities of universal joy.

Then some day "ole Marster" dies, and the negroes, one by one, young and old, file into the darkened parlor to take a last look at his quiet face. He had his furious temper, "ole Marster" had, and his sins — which God forgive! To-day he will be buried, and tomorrow "young Marster" will inherit his saddle-horse and ride out into the fields.

Thus he has come into possession of his negroes. Among them are a few whose working days are over. These are to be kindly cared for, decently buried. Next are the active laborers, and, last, the generation of children. He knows them all by name, capacity, and disposition; is bound to them by lifelong associations; hears their communications and complaints. When he goes to town, he is charged with commissions, makes purchases with their own money. Continuing the course of his father, he sets about doing for them what is best under the circumstances, — making them capable, contented workmen. There shall be special training for special aptitude. One shall be made a blacksmith, a second a carpenter, a third a cobbler of shoes. In all the general industries of the farm, education shall not be lacking. It is claimed that a Kentucky negro invented the hemp-brake. As a result of this effective management, the Southern planter, looking northward, will pay him a handsome premium for the blue-grass slave. He will have no white overseer. He does not like the type of man. Besides, one is not needed. Uncle Tom served his father in this capacity; let him be.

Suppose, now, that among his negroes he finds a bad one. What shall he do with him? Keep him? Keeping him makes him worse, and moreover he corrupts the others. Set him free? That is to put a reward upon evil. Sell him to his neighbors? They don't want him. If they did, he wouldn't sell him to them. He sells him into the South. This is a statement, not an apology. Here, for a moment, one touches the terrible subject of the internal slave-trade. Negroes were sold from Kentucky into the Southern market because, as has just been said, they were bad, or by reason of the law of partible inheritance, or, as was the case with Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom, under constraint of debt. Of course, in many cases, they were sold wantonly and cruelly; but these, however many, were not enough to make the internal slave-trade more than an incidental and subordinate feature of the system. The belief that negroes in Kentucky were regularly bred and reared for the Southern market is a mistaken one. Mrs. Stowe

herself fell into the error of basing an argument for the prevalence of the slave-trade in this State upon the notion of exhausted lands, as the following passage from "The Key to 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'" shows:

"In Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky slave-labor long ago impoverished the soil almost beyond recovery and became entirely unprofitable."

Those words were written some thirty-five years ago and refer to a time long prior to that date. Now, the fact is that at least one-half the soil of Kentucky has never been under cultivation at all, and could not therefore have been exhausted by slave-labor. At least a half of the remainder, though cultivated ever since, is still not seriously exhausted; and of the small portion, a large share was always naturally poor, so that for this reason slave-labor was but little employed on it. The great slaveholding region of the State was the fertile region which has never been impoverished. I am sure that Mrs. Stowe will be glad to see her statement restricted in this way. To return from this digression, it may well be that the typical Kentucky farmer does not find among his negroes a single bad one; for in consequence of the early non-importation of slaves for barter or sale, and through long association with the household, they have been greatly elevated and humanized. If he must sell a good one, he will seek a buyer among his neighbors. He will even ask the negro to name his choice of a master and try to consummate his wish. No purchaser near by, he will mount his saddle-horse and look for one in the adjoining county. In this way the negroes of different estates and neighborhoods were commonly connected by kinship and intermarriage. How unjust to say that such a master did not feel affection for his slaves, anxiety for their happiness, sympathy with the evils inseparable from their condition. Let me cite the case of a Kentucky master who had failed. He could pay his debts by sacrificing his negroes or his farm, one or the other. To avoid separating the former, probably sending some of them South, he kept them in a body and sold his farm. Any one who knows the Kentuckian's love of land and home will know what this means. A few years, and the war left him without anything. Another case is more interesting still. A master, having failed, actually hurried his negroes off to Canada. Tried for defrauding his creditors, and that by slaveholding jurors, he was acquitted. The plea of his counsel, among other arguments, was the master's unwillingness to see his old and faithful servitors scattered and suffering. After emancipation, old farm hands sometimes refused to budge from their cabins. Their

former masters paid them for their services as long as they could work, and supported them when helpless. I have in mind an instance where a man, having left Kentucky, sent back hundreds of dollars to an aged, needy domestic, though himself far from rich; and another case where a man still contributes annually to the maintenance of those who ceased to work for him the quarter of a century ago.

The good in human nature is irrepressible. Slavery, evil as it was, when looked at from the telescopic remoteness of human history as it is to be, will be adjudged an institution that gave development, on the side of virtue, to certain very noble types of character. Along with other social forces peculiar to the age, it produced in Kentucky a kind of gentleman farmer, the like of which will never appear again. He had the aristocratic virtues: highest notions of personal liberty and personal honor, a fine especial scorn of anything that was mean, little, cowardly. As an agriculturist he was not driving or merciless or grasping; for the rapid amassing of wealth was not among his passions, and the contention of splendid living was not among his thorns. To a certain carelessness of riches he added a certain profuseness of expenditure; and indulgent toward his own pleasures, toward others, his equals or dependents, he bore himself with a spirit of ready kindness and proud magnanimity. Intolerant of tyranny, he was in turn no tyrant. To say of such a man, as Jefferson said of every slaveholder, that he lived in perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions and unremitting despotism, and in the exaction of the most degrading submission, was to pronounce a judgment hasty and unfair. Rather did Mrs. Stowe, while not blind to his faults, discern his virtues when she made him, embarrassed by debt, exclaim: "If anybody had said to me that I should sell Tom down South to one of those rascally traders, I should have said, 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?'"

#### IV.

BUT there was another person who, more than the master, sustained close relationship to the negro life of the household,—the mistress. In the person of Mrs. Shelby Mrs. Stowe described some of the best traits of a Kentucky woman of the time; but perhaps only a Southern woman herself could do full justice to a character which many duties and many burdens endued with extraordinary strength and varied efficiency.

She was mistress of distinct realms—the house and the cabins—and the guardian of the bonds between the two, which were always troublesome, often delicate, sometimes distressing. In those cabins were nearly always

some poor creatures needing sympathy and watch-care: the superannuated mothers helpless with babes, babes helpless without mothers, the sick, perhaps the idiotic. Apparel must be had for all. Standing in her doorway and pointing to the meadow, she must be able to say in the words of a housewife of the period, "There are the sheep; now get your clothes." Some must be taught to keep the spindle and the loom going; others trained for dairy, laundry, kitchen, dining-room; others yet taught fine needlework. Upon her falls the labor of private instruction and moral exhortation, for the teaching of negroes was not forbidden in Kentucky. She must remind them that their marriage vows are holy and binding; must interpose between mothers and their cruel punishment of their own offspring. What is hardest of all, she must herself punish for lying, theft, immorality. Her own children, too, must be guarded against temptation and corrupting influences. In her life there is no cessation of this care: it renews itself daily, year in and year out. Beneath every other trouble is the secret conviction that she has no right to enslave these creatures, and that, however improved their condition, this life is one of great and necessary evils. Mrs. Stowe well makes her say: "I have tried—tried most faithfully as a Christian woman should—to do my duty toward these poor, simple, dependent creatures. I have cared for them, instructed them, watched over them, and known all their little cares and joys for years. . . . I have taught them the duties of the family, of parent and child, and husband and wife. . . . I thought by kindness and care and instruction, I could make the condition of mine better than freedom." So sorely overburdened and heroic mold of woman! Fulfilling each day a round of intricate duties, rising at any hour of the night to give medicine to the sick, liable at any time, in addition to the cares of her great household, to see an entire family of acquaintances arriving unannounced, with trunks and servants of their own, for a visit protracted in accordance with the large hospitalities of the time,—what wonder if, from sheer inability to do all things herself, she trains her negroes to different posts of honor, so that the black cook finally expels her from her own kitchen and rules over that realm as an autocrat of unquestioned prerogatives?

Mistresses of this kind had material reward in the trusty adherence of their servants during the war. Their relations throughout this period—so well calculated to try the loyalty of the African nature—would of themselves make up a volume of the most touching incidents. Even to-day one will find in many Kentucky households survivals of the old





THE MISTRESS.

order — find "Aunt Chloe" ruling as a despot in the kitchen, and making her will the pivotal point of the whole domestic system. I have spent nights with a great Kentuckian, self-willed and high-spirited, whose occasional refusals to rise for a half-past five o'clock breakfast always brought the cook from the kitchen up to his bedroom, where she delivered her commands in a voice worthy of Catherine the Great. "We shall have to get up," he would say, "or there'll be a row!" One may yet see, also, old negresses setting out for an annual or a semi-annual visit to their

former mistresses, and bearing some offering, — a basket of fruits or flowers. I should like to mention the case of one who died after the war and left her two children to her mistress, to be reared and educated. The troublesome and expensive charge was taken and faithfully executed.

Here, in the hard realities of daily life, here is where the crushing burden of slavery fell, — on the women of the South. History has yet to do justice to the noblest type of them, whether in Kentucky or elsewhere. In view of what they accomplished, despite the difficulties in their way, there is nothing they have

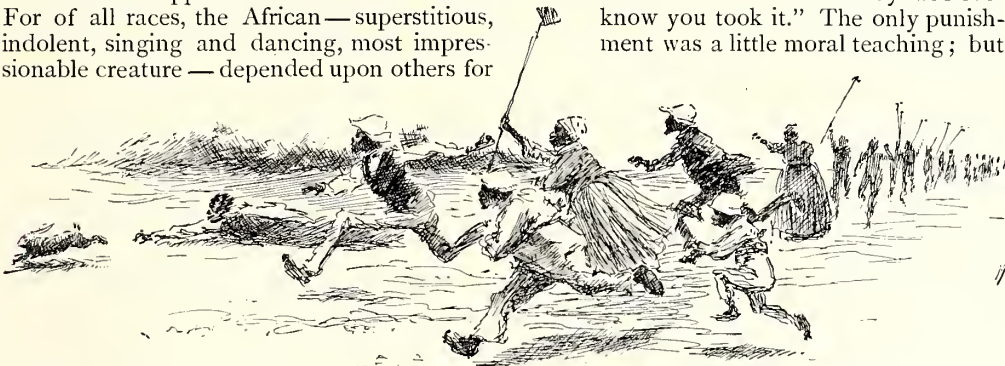


found harder to forgive in the women of the North than the failure to sympathize with them in the struggles and sorrows of their lot, and to realize that *they* were the real practical philanthropists of the negro race.

v.

BUT as is the master, so is the slave, and it is through the characters of the Sheldys that we must approach that of Uncle Tom. For of all races, the African—superstitious, indolent, singing and dancing, most impressionable creature—depended upon others for

of lard, naming the thief and the hiding-place. "Say not a word about it," replied his master. The next day he rode out into the field where the culprit was plowing, and, getting down, walked along beside him. "What's the matter, William?" he asked after a while; "you can't look me in the face as usual." William burst into tears, and confessed everything. "Come to-night, and I will arrange so that you can put the lard back and nobody will ever know you took it." The only punishment was a little moral teaching; but



CHASING THE RABBIT.

enlightenment, training, and happiness. If, therefore, you find him so intelligent that he may be sent on important business commissions, so honest that he may be trusted with money, house, and home, so loyal that he will not seize opportunity to become free; if you find him endowed with the manly virtues of dignity and self-respect united to the Christian virtues of humility, long-suffering, and forgiveness, then do not, in marveling at him on these accounts, quite forget his master and his mistress,—they made him what he was. And it is something to be said on their behalf, that in their household was developed a type of slave that could be set upon a sublime moral pinnacle to attract the admiration of the world.

Attention is fixed on Uncle Tom first as head-servant of the farm. In a small work on slavery in Kentucky by George Harris, it is stated that masters chose the cruelest of their negroes for this office. It is not true, exceptions allowed for. The work would not be worth mentioning, had not so many people at the North believed it. The amusing thing is, they believed Mrs. Stowe also. But if Mrs. Stowe's account of slavery in Kentucky is true, the other is not. But those who have been able to accept both would not care, of course, to be restricted to one.

It is true that Uncle Tom inspired the other negroes with some degree of fear. He was censor of morals, and reported derelictions of the lazy, the destructive, and the thievish. For instance, an Uncle Tom on one occasion told his master of the stealing of a keg

the Uncle Tom in the case, though he kept his secret, looked for some days as though the dignity of his office had not been suitably upheld.

It was "Uncle Tom's" duty to get the others off to work in the morning. In the fields he did not drive the work, but led it—being a master worker—led the cradles and the reaping-hooks, the hemp-breaking and the corn-shucking. The spirit of happy music went with the workers. They were not goaded through their daily tasks by the spur of pitiless husbandry. Nothing was more common than their voluntary contests of skill and power. My recollection reaches only to the last two or three years of slavery; but I remember the excitement with which I witnessed some of these hard-fought battles of the negroes. Rival hemp-breakers of the neighborhood, meeting in the same field, would slip out long before breakfast and sometimes never stop for dinner. So it was with cradling, corn-shucking, or corn-cutting—in all work where rivalries were possible. No doubt there were other motives. So much was a day's task; for all over there was extra pay. A capital hand, by often performing double or treble the required amount, would clear a neat profit in a season. The days of severest labor fell naturally in harvest-time. But then intervals of rest in the shade were commonly given; and milk, coffee, or, when the prejudice of the master did not prevent (which was not often!), whisky was distributed between meal-times. As a rule they worked without hurry. De Tocqueville gave unintentional testimony to a



THE PREACHER.

characteristic of slavery in Kentucky when he described the negroes as "loitering" in the fields. On one occasion all the hands dropped work to run after a rabbit the dogs had started. A passer-by indignantly reported the fact at headquarters. "Sir," said the old gentleman, with a hot face, "I'd have whipped the last damn rascal of 'em if they *hadn't* run 'im!"

The negroes made money also off their truck-patches, in which they raised for sale melons, broom-corn, vegetables. When Charles

Sumner was in Kentucky, he saw with almost incredulous eyes the comfortable cabins with their flowers and poultry, the fruitful truck-patches, and a genuine Uncle Tom — "a black gentleman with his own watch!" Well enough does Mrs. Stowe put these words into her hero's mouth, when he hears he is to be sold: "I'm feared things will be kinder goin' to rack when I'm gone. Mas'r can't be 'spected to be a-pryin' round everywhere as I've done, a-keepin' up all the ends. The boys means well, but they's powerful car'less."

More interesting is Uncle Tom's character as a preacher. Contemporary with him in Kentucky was a class of men among his people who exhorted, held prayer-meetings in the cabins and baptizings in the woods, performed marriage ceremonies, and enjoyed great freedom of movement. There was one in nearly every neighborhood, and all together they wrought effectively in the moral development of their race.

I have nothing to say

here touching the vast and sublime conception which Mrs. Stowe formed of "Uncle Tom's" spiritual nature. But certainly no idealized manifestation of it is better than this simple occurrence: One of these negro preachers was allowed by his master to fill a distant appointment. Belated once, and returning homeward after the hour forbidden for slaves to be abroad, he was caught by the patrol and cruelly whipped. As the blows fell, his only words were: "Jesus Christ suffered for righteousness"



sake ; so kin I." Another of them was recommended for deacon's orders and actually ordained. When liberty came, he refused to be free, and continued to work in his master's family till his death. With considerable knowledge of the Bible and a fluent tongue, he would nevertheless sometimes grow confused and lose his train of thought. At these embarrassing junctures it was his wont suddenly to call out at the top of his voice, "Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?" The effect upon his hearers was electrifying ; and as none but a very highly favored being could be thought worthy of enjoying this persecution, he thus converted his loss of mind into spiritual reputation. A third, named Peter Cotton, united the vocations of exhorter and wood-chopper. He united them literally, for one moment Peter might be seen standing on his log chopping away, and the next kneeling down beside it praying. He got his mistress to make him a long jeans coat and on the ample tails of it to embroider, by his direction, sundry texts of Scripture, such as : "Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden!" Thus literally clothed with righteousness, Peter went from cabin to cabin preaching the Word. Well for him if that other Peter could have seen him! The apostle might have felt proud to go along.

These men sometimes made a pathetic addition to their marriage ceremonies : "Until death or *our higher powers* do you separate!"

Another typical contemporary of Uncle Tom's was the negro-fiddler. It should be

remembered that before he hears he is to be sold South, Uncle Tom is pictured as a light-hearted creature, capering and dancing in his cabin. There was no lack of music in those cabins. The banjo was played, but more commonly the fiddle. A home-made variety



THE FIDDLER.

of the former consisted of a crook-necked, hard-shell gourd and a piece of sheep-skin. There were sometimes other instruments,—the flageolet and the triangle. I have heard of a kettle-drum's being made of a copper still. (A Kentucky negro carried through the war as an osseous tambourine the skull of a mule, the rattling teeth being secured in the jaw-bones.) Of course the bones were everywhere. Negro music on one or more instruments was in the highest vogue at the house. The young Ken-



tuckians often used it on serenading bravuras. The old fiddler, most of all, was held in reverent esteem and met with the gracious treatment of the ancient minstrel in feudal halls. At parties and weddings, at picnics in the summer woods, he was the soul of melody, and with an eye to the high demands upon his art, he widened his range of selections and perfected according to native standards his inimitable technique. The deep, tender, pure

you to-day the same assurance. Nay, it is an awkward discovery to make, that some of them still cherish resentment toward agitators who came secretly among them, fomented discontent, and led them away from homes to which they afterwards returned. And I want to state here, for no other reason than that of making an historic contribution to the study of the human mind and passions, that a man's views of slavery in those days did not always deter-

mine his treatment of his slaves. The only case of mutiny and stampede that I have been able to discover in a certain part of Kentucky, took place among the negroes of a man who was known as an outspoken emancipationist. He pleaded for the freedom of the negro, but in the mean time worked him at home with the chain round his neck and the ball resting on his plow.

Christmas was, of course, the time of holiday merry-making, and the "Ketchin' marster an' mistiss Christmas gif'" was a great feature. One morning an aged couple presented themselves.

"Well, what do you want for your Christmas gift?"

"Freedom! Mistiss."

"Freedom! Haven't you been as good as free for the last ten years?"

"Yaas, mistiss; but — freedom mighty sweet!"

"Then take your freedom!"

The only method of celebrating the boon was the moving into a cabin on the neighboring farm of their mistress's aunt and being freely supported there as



SAVING HIS MASTER.

feeling in the song "Old Kentucky Home" is a true historic interpretation.

It is wide of the mark to suppose that on such a farm as that of the Shelys the negroes were in a perpetual frenzy of discontent or felt any burning desire for freedom. It is difficult to reach a true general conclusion on this delicate subject. But it must go for something that even the Kentucky abolitionists of those days will tell you that well-treated negroes cared not a snap for liberty. Negroes themselves, and very intelligent ones, will give

they had been freely supported at home!

Mrs. Stowe has said, "There is nothing picturesque or beautiful in the family attachment of old servants, which is not to be found in countries where these servants are legally free." On the contrary, a volume of incidents might readily be gathered, the picturesqueness and beauty of which are due so largely, if not wholly, to the fact that the negroes were not free servants, but slaves. Indeed, many could never have happened at all but in this relationship. I cite the case of an old negro who was



buying his freedom from his master, who continued to make payments during the war, and made the final one at the time of General Kirby Smith's invasion of Kentucky. After he had paid him the uttermost farthing, he told him that if he should ever be a slave again, he wanted him for his master. Less to the point, but too good to leave out, is the case of an old negress who had been allowed to accumulate considerable property. At her death she willed it to her young master instead of to her sons, as she would have been allowed to do. But the war! what is to be said of the part the negro took in that? Is there in the drama of all humanity a figure more picturesque or more pathetic than the figure of the African slave, as he followed his master to the battle-field, marched and hungered and thirsted with him, served and cheered and nursed him,—that master who was fighting to keep him in slavery? Instances are too many; but the one may be mentioned of a Kentucky negro who followed his young master into the Southern army, staid with him till he fell on the field, lay hid out in the bushes a week, and finally, after a long time and many hardships, got back to his mistress in Kentucky, bringing his dead master's horse and purse and trinkets. This subject comprises a whole vast field of its own; and if the history of it is ever written, it will

be written in the literature of the South, for there alone lies the knowledge and *the love*.

It is only through a clear view of the peculiar features of slavery in Kentucky before the war that one can understand the general status of the negroes of Kentucky at the present time. Perhaps in no other State has the race made less endeavor to push itself into equality with the white. This fact must be explained as in part resulting from the conservative ideals of Kentucky life in general. But it is more largely due to the influences of a system which, though no longer in vogue, is still remembered, still powerful to rule the minds of a naturally submissive and most susceptible people. The kind, even affectionate, relations of the races under the old régime have continued with so little interruption that the blacks remain content with their inferiority, and lazily drift through life. I venture to make the statement, that wherever they have attempted most to enforce their new-born rights, they have either, on the one hand, been encouraged to do so, or have, on the other, been driven to self-assertion by harsh treatment. But treat them always kindly and always as hopelessly inferior beings, and they will do least for themselves. This, it is believed, is the key-note to the situation in Kentucky; and the statement is made as a fact, not as an argument.

*James Lane Allen.*

#### HAND-CAR 412. C. P. R.

(ON THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.)



FOR the last hour the construction train had been traveling slowly; for a whole hour it had cautiously stumbled over the loosened fish-plates with a monotonous chug-gety-chug, chunkety-chunk that had long ceased to awaken any interest, sympathetic or otherwise, in our drowsy minds. Finally it stopped altogether with a jerk, as if it had suddenly but conclusively realized the vanity of any further effort. The astonished cars pulled at their pins and pounded their buffers as if in angry expostulation at this freak of the locomotive, and some of the men offered energetic advice to the Deity as to what ultimate course to pursue with the management of the road in general and the long freight-links in particular. "Can't help it, can't help it!" said the brakeman as he came along the top of the box-car ahead. "The rails have spread, and it'll be two hours, may be three, before we start her up again."

But the time passed, the train still waited, and we began to grumble stoutly, wondering

why, in the name of various places and things, they chose to dally in such a dismal, god-forsaken spot. It was raining at Rat Crossing; in fact it had been raining slowly, steadily, for two days with a certain desperate pertinacity. There had been no previous drought to render such an abundance of water desirable; in the country through which we passed we had noticed no fields of parched wheat, no withering trees, no drooping vegetables, no thirsty cattle, no traveled roads on which the dust required laying. On the contrary, the lakes were all full to overflowing, the rivers swollen, the ravines drowned, the swamps soaked, and the tanks so full that the relief-pipes poured forth a continuous stream of spattering expostulation.

Notwithstanding this lavish excess of water the airseemed no fresher than before the storm, when the thermometer in the caboose registered 97 degrees on the shady side of the track. Both front and side doors were wide open, and some of the boys, in a vain endeavor to produce a passing sensation of freshness, sat down in the semi-fluid puddles, covered with a film of cin-



DRAWN BY GEORGE RICHMOND, LONDON.

REPRODUCED FROM THE STEEL ENGRAVING BY FRANCIS HOLL.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, 1853



## THE AUTHOR OF «UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.»

IN any brief sketch of the personality and career of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, it is proper to regard her chiefly as the creator of «Uncle Tom's Cabin,» a novel which had its share in changing the Constitution of the United States, and which, as Emerson has it, «encircled the globe, and was the only book that found readers in the parlor, the nursery, and the kitchen of every household.»

Harriet Beecher came of a most distinguished American family, Lyman Beecher's name speaking for itself, while his first wife, Rosanna Foote, Harriet's mother, was a remarkable woman, of stock than which Connecticut can boast no better. That a girl thus born should have had a predisposition to books and, even more, to the things of the spirit was, one might say, foreordained, if there is aught in ancestry. Her home nurture and her educational advantages were such as to fit out a future writer of intense moral earnestness. Yet with these distinctly superior and cultivated antecedents went the New England plainness, the Puritan simplicity, even a touch of Spartan deprivation. Lyman Beecher, became a famous man, a shining light of the American pulpit; but he was a very poor and obscure one in 1811, when in the flower month of June, and in the beautiful old Connecticut hill-town of Litchfield, his sixth child, Harriet, was born.

The little daughter early showed her bookishness, and at the age of six was finding delight in the «Arabian Nights.» At ten she was fascinated with the more often dreaded task of theme-writing, and at twelve she produced a paper with the following title: «Can the Immortality of the Soul be Proved by the Light of Nature?»—a thesis gravely answered in the negative. Her schooling was obtained at the Litchfield Academy, and then at her sister Catherine's noted school at Hartford, where, at thirteen, we find her turning Ovid into English verse. Lyman Beecher's removal to Boston in 1826, ostensibly to combat the new heresy of Unitarianism, had the incidental advantage of offering to his family a wider and richer social life; and the same is true of the new experiences which came a few years later when he was called to the presidency of Lane Seminary near Cincinnati, in what then seemed the very West. Harriet taught for a while

in the seminary in Cincinnati of which Catherine, who had moved thither with her kith and kin, was the head. Playful fancy, quick sensibility, keen intelligence, and, underlying all, fullness of religious experience, characterized Harriet Beecher, when, in 1836, at the age of twenty-five, she was married to Professor Calvin Stowe, professor of Biblical Theology in the Lane Seminary. Mrs. Stowe was at that period of her life, and for years thereafter, a woman of delicate health, reminding one, indeed, of Mrs. Browning in smallness and fragility.

Two years before she had won a literary prize of fifty dollars, which turned her thought toward writing as a possible work. This tentative effort, a tale called «Uncle Lot» (a half prophecy in title), induced the embryo writer to devote her rather scant leisure time thereafter to her pen. Gradually, too, the great theme which was later to enlist all the sympathy of her woman's soul was suggested by local happenings. Antislavery agitations in Cincinnati during these years were stirring, and at times even spectacular. We get in letters a vivid picture of the mobbing of a newspaper office when Henry Ward Beecher was the editor of «The Journal,» and, with pistols in his pocket, fulminated against slavery. In 1839 a colored domestic was taken into the family, and it was found necessary to spirit her away some miles into the country, in order to prevent her recapture by her former Southern owner. But even when health permitted, home duties sadly interfered with literary work, of which little was accomplished. Yet there was small doubt in the Stowe household that she was called to literature, and when, in 1849, her husband accepted a professorship in Bowdoin College, Maine, and the family removed to New England, Mrs. Stowe knew herself to be ripe to write the epic of the slave. In 1850 she took a burning interest in the Fugitive Slave Law, and when the suggestion came from her brother's wife, Mrs. Edward Beecher, to make a story on slavery, she was ready for the task. It was a time of moment to the world when, in the little Brunswick parlor, the young wife and mother, after reading the letter, crushed it in her hand, rose from her chair, and exclaimed: «I will write something. I will if I live!» Never was fiction

Sept. 1896

: Offering with weakness she came forward  
 & delivered her basket. — it was of pale might as  
 \*Leporello perceived but affecting anger he said  
 What you lady beast! short again! stand aside  
 you'd catch it pretty soon  
 The woman gave a groan & after despair  
 & sat down on a board

FROM THE MANUSCRIPT OF "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN," OWNED BY MISS E. T. STOWE.

born more directly and honestly of ethical interest and indignation. It was, as her son says, the cry of a woman's heart, not of her head at all. The supereminent merits, the artistic defects, of the work are thus explained. There was behind it an American mother sensitive to liberty, with memories of Bunker Hill and Concord in her mind, who had loved and lost children of her own, and who came of a stock dedicate by principle and practice to the pursuit of righteousness. These are things to consider in any estimate of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," whether as a work of art or as a power in the world.

It has been emphasized of late that in 1849 a certain colored man was brought a number of times to the Stowe house at Walnut Hill, Cincinnati, where he told his piteous story of escape, capture, and cruel privation, and this man is pointed to as the prototype of the hero in the great novel. The "original" Uncle Tom and the "original" Topsy seem to some to be of supreme importance. Concerning this Uncle Tom of Walnut Hill, it is sufficient to say that while no doubt such a man appeared there, talked with the mistress, and moved her to pity for his misfortunes, his story is by no means that of the character immortalized by the writer. The simple truth is that this incident, like many another, acted as a suggestion to Mrs. Stowe, as she brooded over her work; it is a misconception of her methods of literary labor (and, indeed, of almost all such labor which proves potent) to imagine that her Uncle Tom was starkly taken from life. In the same way, discussion has arisen concerning Lewis Clark of Lexington, Ky., a venerable colored man, describing himself as the original study for George Harris in the tale. That Mrs. Stowe did make use of one Lewis Clark in limning the character of Harris may be ascertained by any one who reads her "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin," a book written explicitly to show the sources whence she drew the data for her fiction. The only question is, then, whether the Clark spoken of in the "Key" is the Kentucky Clark, with whom an alleged interview has recently been published. It is not only possible, but probable, that they are one and the same. A brother of the original Lewis, a well-known character in Boston, employed in the office of the assistant treasurer, affirms stoutly that his kinsman is alive in Lexington. The whole matter is one of the difference between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and would have no interest were it not that a letter from one of Mrs. Stowe's daughters, which



has been printed, has been interpreted to deny the existence of such an impostor as Lewis Clark of Lexington. In fact, the letter did nothing of the kind; it only declared that a rumor about a certain Lewis Clark, printed in a periodical in 1891, was untrue, so far as it had any connection with Mrs. Stowe.

It may be repeated that the whole ques-

tribute something to its columns. This periodical was in those days of much literary merit, Whittier being a corresponding editor, and Mrs. Southworth, Alice and Phæbe Cary, and Grace Greenwood, among its contributors. Mrs. Stowe began upon the story, writing first the scene on the Legree plantation where Uncle Tom is so brutally misused. She then penned the opening chapters, and



DRAWN BY CHARLES HERBERT WOODBURY.

THE HOUSE AT BRUNSWICK, MAINE, WHERE «UNCLE TOM'S CABIN» WAS WRITTEN.

tion as to the prototypes of the book is hardly worth mooting. It was the frequent assertion of the author in her prime that the character of Uncle Tom was drawn from no particular person, and she is perfectly frank in the «Key» in stating her sources and suggestions when any exist. This is in no way incompatible with the concessions first made. The fiction was essentially a product both of the outer experiences and the inward life of the writer; its types, figures, and scenes came of the creative imagination, differing from the raw material offered by objective facts, because of the selective instinct and transmuting touch of the born story-teller. Mrs. Stowe threw off the book in a moral white heat,—an improviser like Walter Scott, Dumas the elder, and George Sand,—and the magical influence of her first novel is largely explained in this way.

Thus instigated by her kinsfolk to write on a subject her soul was full of, an additional incentive came in the shape of a letter from Dr. Gamaliel Bailey, editor of the Washington «National Era,» requesting her to con-

sent them to Dr. Bailey, writing instalment after instalment at Brunswick, as the successive parts appeared—a dangerous method of procedure, but in this case not seeming to injure the quality or power of the tale. The story was published serially from June, 1851, to April, 1852. The account of its instant and immense success reads almost like a fairy-tale. The shy, modest wife of the country professor awoke, like Byron, to find herself famous: the days of poverty were over; in four months her royalties were ten thousand dollars; within a year three hundred thousand copies were sold in the United States alone, while in England forty editions appeared within the same time. Thus was the most widely sought book of modern times, within the domain of literature, started on its course of unprecedented popularity. It was dramatized the same year of its publication, and the foreign translations also began at once, extending to twenty lands, beginning with France. Nor was «Uncle Tom's Cabin» merely a popular success. Letters received by the author from the leading



writers of America and England added welcome critical appreciation. One or two such may be cited. Longfellow wrote: «I congratulate you most cordially upon the immense success and influence of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.' It is one of the greatest triumphs recorded in literary history, to say nothing of the higher triumph of its moral effect.» Perhaps no criticism ever received by Mrs. Stowe was keener, more authoritative, and kinder than that of Mr. Lowell, in a letter written mainly in reference to another story,—«The Minister's Wooing,»—but touching on the earlier book. «From long habit,» he says, «and from the tendency of my studies, I cannot help looking at things from an æsthetic point of view, and what I valued in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was the genius and not the moral. That is saying a good deal, for I never use the word *genius* at haphazard and always (perhaps too) sparingly.» This dictum from a truly great critic may be taken as an antidote by those who in their zeal for pointing out technical defects in the novel fail to see its very palpable merits—the vivid realization of scene and character, and the dramatic instinct for story-telling. Needless to say that the effect of the story upon public

thought both here and abroad was electric; the air was surcharged with feeling, and ready to become impassioned. Call «Uncle Tom's Cabin» special pleading or no, as we will, after its reading the Missouri Compromise was felt to be a monstrous, an impossible thing.

At the age of forty-one, then, Harriet Beecher Stowe found herself a writer of transatlantic reputation, whose every future book would be an event in the literary world. Her first novel was written at forty, when she was a mature woman, acquainted with grief, and had lived widely and well in the best sense. It may be recalled that George Eliot (between whom and Mrs. Stowe a sincere friendship was destined to spring up) wrote her «Scenes of Clerical Life» at thirty-seven—another example of a comparatively late turning to fiction by a writer of power. Henceforth Mrs. Stowe's experiences were to be broader, richer, more varied. In 1852 she went to Europe for the first of her three foreign trips, which extended her horizon in all ways, and brought her precious friends among the chosen of England and elsewhere. Her travel was almost a royal progress in respect to the attention paid her by the pop-



DRAWN BY HARRY FENN.

MRS. STOWE'S HOUSE AT MANDARIN, FLORIDA, 1878.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.





ENGRAVED BY R. G. TIETZE, AFTER A DAGUERRETYPE, 1852.

OWNED BY MRS. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Truly Yours  
Harriet Beecher Stowe





DRAWN BY ALBERT ABENDSCHEIN.

AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY HASTINGS, BOSTON.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, 1888.

ulace, while affectionate ties were formed with the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, Charles Kingsley, Lady Byron, John Ruskin, George Eliot, the Brownings, and many more. Throughout her wanderings, and in her contact with all classes in her own country, Mrs. Stowe remained what she always was—the simple, unpretending American woman, who regarded her gift as a trust from God, and was weighed down with a sense of its responsibility. Naturally of a retiring, even shrinking, disposition, she steadily preferred the quiet of the home-circle to all else the world could offer. A letter in which she describes her personal appearance is an index of her modest estimate of herself in

general: "I am a little bit of a woman, rather more than forty, as withered and dry as a pinch of snuff; never very well worth looking at in my best days, and now a decidedly used-up article." For many years her work in the United States was not only that of a *littérateur*, but of lecturer and propagandist as well, until the war with its wiping off of the blot of slavery gave her liberty to rest from her labors in that hard-fought field. The long crescendo of work in this kind found its climax in the publication in the "Atlantic," in 1863, of the reply which she wrote in response to the address to the women of America by the sister-women of Great Britain and Ireland, signed, it will be



remembered, by a shining list of great names. In her own person in that pronouncement she stood for and summed up the womanhood of her nation.

"Dred," intended by the writer to be in some sort a complement to the earlier novel, appeared in 1856, and one hundred thousand copies were sold in England within four weeks. Harriet Martineau thought it superior to "Uncle Tom," and the work certainly contains some vivid scenes, and, moreover, has the merit of depicting the normal social conditions in the South during slavery days. Then two years later came "The Minister's Wooing," which most critics will agree with Mr. Lowell in considering her best work, technically viewed. "The Minister's Wooing," "The Pearl of Orr's Island," and "Old Town Folks," produced during the fourteen years between 1855 and 1869, although by no means on a level of workmanship, constitute pioneer action in an important field, fruitfully developed in later days by Mrs. Cooke, Miss Jewett, Miss Wilkins, and others. These tales are no slight part of the author's literary creation, and historically are of significance in the evolution of American story-making. Half a dozen books were written by Mrs. Stowe after 1869, the last so late as 1881. But it is best to regard her major activity as closed with the year 1870.

In 1863 the family moved from Andover, Mass., with whose seminary Professor Stowe had long been connected, to Hartford, Conn. It was natural that Mrs. Stowe should come to the Connecticut city where she had studied as a school-girl, and where her sister

Isabella Beecher Hooker was living. In the course of a decade the growth of manufacturing interests had so encroached upon her property that the place was disposed of, and the Stowes moved a short distance to Forest street, and bought a cottage, the houses of Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner being hard by. Here she lived for more than twenty-two years. In the old days active with her pen, and often seen in the society of the little city, for the last dozen years she had been in entire seclusion from social duties and pleasures, and incapacitated from literary labor. Her last public appearance as a woman of letters was on June 14, 1882, on the occasion of a garden party, given by her publishers at Newtonville, Mass., in honor of her seventieth birthday. In 1865 Mrs. Stowe purchased and fitted up an attractive Southern home in Mandarin, Fla., and thither she repaired for twenty years, giving up the wonted south-faring in 1885 because of her husband's failing health.

Mrs. Stowe's experiences were exceptional, her achievements conspicuous. The ethical was dominant in her career—the world of spirits, ideas, ideals, and aspirations was the world of her chief interest. In the making of her mightiest book she regarded herself as a medium—in the noble sense of that much misused word. "Are you not thankful, Mrs. Stowe," said a neighbor of late, "that you wrote 'Uncle Tom's Cabin?'" With a flash of the old fire she replied, "I did not write that book: God put a pen into my hand; he wrote it."

*Richard Burton.*



DRAWN BY W. H. DRAKE.

**BRACELET MADE IN IMITATION OF THE MANACLES OF A SLAVE.**

Presented to Mrs. Stowe by Harriet Elizabeth Georgiana, second Duchess of Sutherland, in 1853, at a reception at Stafford House, London. The links bear, with certain antislavery dates, the following inscription: "562848, March 19, 1853" (the date and number of signatures to the address by the women of England to the women of America). The sheets of this address were sent to all the English colonies, and wherever British residents could be found. It was presented to Mrs. Stowe by the Duchess of Sutherland, and is now bound in twenty-four large volumes.

in that little heroic advance guard of men and women who battled valiantly for the spread of anti-slavery sentiment in this republic Harriet Beecher Stowe was most conspicuous. Her propaganda was conducted within her own domestic circle, and her potent weapon was her pen, but it accomplished marvels. Her "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was a real invincible armada. Once launched, there was nothing that could silence its guns. On its earliest appearance in serial form it began its career as an educative force, and it grew daily as a maker of sentiment.

Nor did it matter much that it was a work which, measured even by the standards of the time, was not esteemed a notable example of literary handicraft. That it was never accepted by those whose opinion should have been final as a true picture of conditions as they actually were did not in the least militate against its potency as a reforming agent. It kept right on in its victorious and convincing way regard-



HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, 1864.

less of the protests that there were no Legrees or Marksies, that the slave market scene was the product of a diseased imagination and that half the horrors revealed in its pages were nonexistent.

It was an avant-courier of Abraham Lincoln and his mission, and the great emancipator always regarded it as such. For its author he had the most appreciative admiration, and she was always welcomed at the White House.

#### Why Lincoln Told Stories.

Lincoln undoubtedly appropriated all the stories he could acquaint himself with, regardless of their antiquity, and often, no doubt, he adapted their point to the conditions of the people he lived among. His own explanation of his extraordinary propensity to anecdote in speech or conversation is excellently given in the Century Magazine by Colonel Silas W. Burt, who relates a remarkable incident, hitherto unpublished, of civil war history. It is not necessary in this connection to do more than quote the words.

I often avoid a long and useless discussion by others or a laborious explanation on my own part by a short story that illustrates my point of view. So, too, the sharpness of a refusal or the edge of a rebuke may be blunted by an appropriate story, so as to save wounded feeling and yet serve the purpose. No; I am not simply a story teller, but story telling as an emollient saves me much friction and distress."

It may be added that this accords with the view which most students of Lincoln's character had reached.

#### Lincoln's Cabinet.

Lincoln hated to dictate. He shrank from assuming to control the members of his cabinet until forced by circumstances to take upon himself the responsibility. His natural preference was to work with rather than to lead men. He could not bear to humble any fellow being, however low his rank. But he found as emergencies arose that some one must rule and that as president he alone was responsible to the people. His courage never permitted him to shirk a duty, and thus little by little his power was modestly put forth.

When the members of Lincoln's cabinet first met probably no one among them suspected that their counsels would be ruled by the man who sat at the head of the table. None of them knew him, and most of them felt they were the superiors of the untried and untrained president. They had all been chosen by him for political or party reasons. Four had been his competitors for the nomination at Chicago.





# McCLURE'S MAGAZINE

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## HOW MRS. STOWE WROTE "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN"

BY

HER SON, CHARLES EDWARD STOWE  
AND HER GRANDSON, LYMAN BEECHER STOWE

As a very little girl, Harriet Beecher Stowe had heard of the horrors of slavery from her aunt, Mary Hubbard, who had married a planter from the West Indies, but had been unable to live on her husband's plantation, because her health was undermined by the mental anguish that she suffered at the scenes of cruelty and wretchedness she was compelled to witness. She returned to the United States and made her home with the Beechers. Of her Mrs. Stowe writes: "What she saw and heard of slavery filled her with constant horror and loathing. I often heard her say that she frequently sat by her window in the tropical night, when all was still, and wished that the island might sink in the ocean, with all its sin and misery, and that she might sink with it." The effect of such expressions on the mind of a sensitive child like Harriet Beecher may well be imagined.

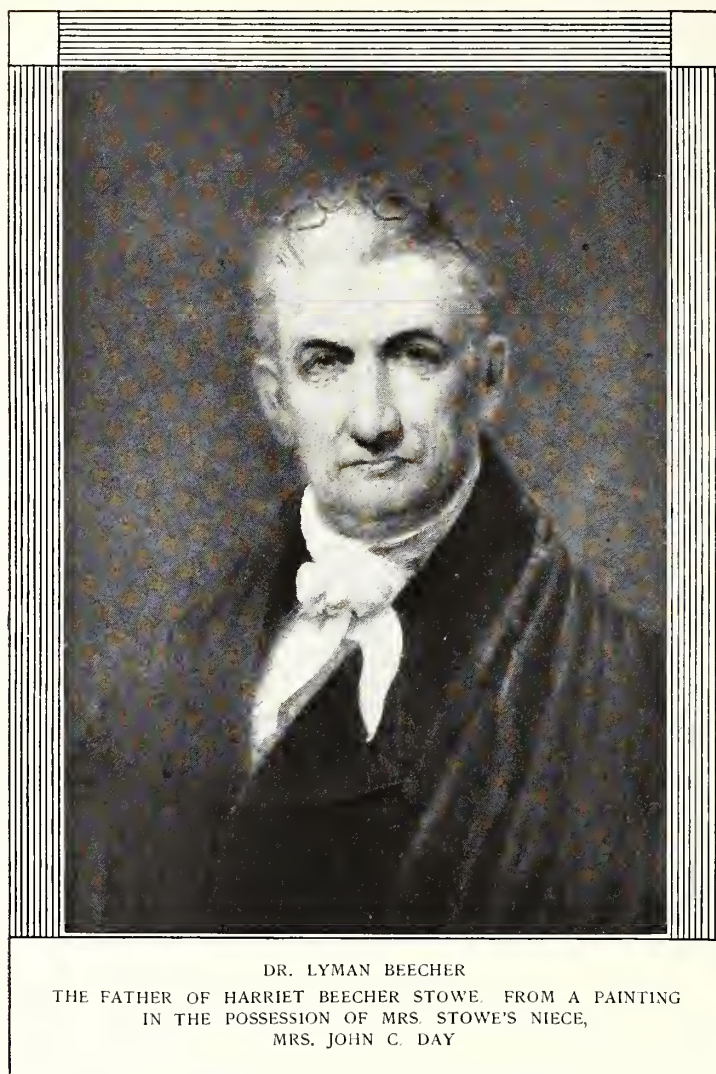
When Harriet was only twenty-one years old she went to live in Cincinnati, on the very borders of a slave State, and frequently visited Kentucky slave plantations, where she saw negro slavery in that mild and patriarchal form in which she pictures it in the opening chapters of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." At the time the Beechers were living in Cincinnati, her brother Charles was nearly driven distracted by trying to appropriate to himself his father's Calvinistic theology, and by the study of Edwards on the will. Filled with fatalism and despair, he gave

up all hope of ever being able to preach, left Cincinnati, and took a position as clerk in a wholesale commission house in New Orleans that did business with the Red River cotton plantations. It was from him that Mrs. Stowe obtained the character of Legree. No character in the whole book was drawn more exactly from life. The Rev. Charles Beecher, and a young Englishman who was his traveling companion, while on a Mississippi steamboat going from New Orleans to St. Louis, actually witnessed the scene where the Legree of real life showed his fist and boasted that it was "hard as iron knocking down niggers"; and that he "didn't bother with sick niggers, but worked his in with the crop."

### *The Flight of a Slave Woman*

The scene in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in which the Senator takes Eliza into his carriage, after her wild flight over the Ohio River on the floating ice, and carries her on a dark and stormy night to a place of safety, is a description of an event that took place in Mrs. Stowe's own Cincinnati household.

She had in her family, as a servant, a young woman whose little boy was the original of the "little Harry" of the story. One day she came to Mrs. Stowe in great distress, and told her that her old master was in the city looking for her, and might at any moment appear and drag



her back to slavery. That very night, dark and stormy though it was, Professor Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher, who was at that time a student in Lane Seminary, took the woman and her child in the family carriage over just such roads as are described in the book, and brought them to the lonely farm-house of a man named Van Zant, who ran one of the stations of the Underground Railroad. As they drove up to the house, Van Zant came out with a lighted candle in his hand, shielding the light from his eyes with his immense palm.

Professor Stowe sang out: "Are you the man who will shelter a poor woman and her child from slave-catchers?"

"I rather think I am," answered the big, honest fellow.

"I thought so," exclaimed Professor Stowe, helping the woman out of the carriage.

So character after character and scene after scene in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" might be traced back to the actual events and persons that inspired them years before the faintest notion of writing such a book had ever entered Mrs. Stowe's mind.

#### *Hardships of Mrs. Stowe's Return to New England*

It was early in the month of May of the year 1850 that Mrs. Stowe, on her way to Brunswick, Maine, reached the house of her brother, the Rev. Edward Beecher, in Boston. She was exhausted from the long journey, which she had





HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

FROM A DRAWING BY RICHMOND, MADE IN 1853, WHILE MRS. STOWE WAS  
MAKING HER FIRST VISIT IN ENGLAND

*Reproduced by courtesy of Mrs. John C. Day*

been compelled to make alone with the whole charge of children, accounts, and baggage, weary of pushing her way through hurrying crowds, looking out for trunks, and bargaining with expressmen and hackmen. Yet in Boston there was no rest for her. She had to buy furniture and

household supplies and have them packed and ready for shipping by the Bath steamer, which she herself was to take the following week, as on the whole the easiest and cheapest way to reach Brunswick. She had to save in every imaginable way, and to keep a strict account of all

money expended. As a result she was able to write her husband, who was ill in Cincinnati, that the whole expense of the journey from Cincinnati to Brunswick would be only a trifle more than seventy-six dollars.

She found her brother Edward and his wife greatly agitated over the Fugitive-Slave Bill, which was at the time being debated in Congress. This law not only gave the slaveholder of the South the right to seek out and drag back into slavery any colored person that he claimed as his property, but commanded the people of the free States to assist in this pitiless business.

On her arrival in Brunswick, Mrs. Stowe was treated to an instructive, if depressing, lesson in New England weather. She says:

"After a week of most incessant northeast storm, most discouraging and forlorn to the children, the sun has at length come out. . . . There is a fair wind blowing, and every prospect, therefore, that our goods will arrive from Boston, and that we shall be in our own house by next week."

In a letter written the following December to her sister-in-law, Mrs. George Beecher, we have this graphic picture of Mrs. Stowe's first months in Brunswick:

"Is it really true that snow is on the ground and Christmas coming, and I have not written unto thee, most dear sister? No, I don't believe it! I haven't been so naughty—it's all a mistake. Yes, written I must have,—and written I have, too,—in the night watches as I lay on my bed—such beautiful letters—I wish you had only gotten them; but by day it has been hurry,

hurry, and drive, drive, drive! or else the calm of the sick-room, ever since last spring.

"I put off writing when your letter first came because I meant to write you a long letter—a full and complete one; and so the days slipped by, and became weeks, and then my little Charley came.\*

"Sarah, when I look back, I wonder at myself, not that I forgot anything that I should remember, but that I have remembered anything. From the time that I left Cincinnati with my children to come forth to a country that I knew not of, almost to the present time, it has seemed that I could scarcely breathe, I was so pressed with care. . . . All day long running from one thing

to another, as, for example, thus:

"Mrs. Stowe, how shall I make this lounge, and what shall I cover the back with first?"

"Mrs. Stowe. 'With the coarse cotton in the closet.'

"Woman. 'Mrs. Stowe, there isn't any more soap to clean the windows. Where shall I get soap?'

"Mrs. Stowe. 'Here, Hattie, run up to the store and get two bars.'

"There is a man below wants to see Mrs. Stowe about the cistern.'

"Before you go down, Mrs. Stowe, show me how to cover this round end of the lounge.'

"There's a man up from the station, and he says that there is a box that has come for Mrs. Stowe, and it's coming up to the house; will you come down and see about it?"

"Mrs. Stowe, don't go till you have shown

\* Her seventh and last child, Charles Edward, born July 8, 1850.



MRS. STOWE AND HER BROTHER, HENRY  
WARD BEECHER

Photograph

made in 1875



Courtesy of Houghton Mifflin Co.

MRS. STOWE AND HER HUSBAND,  
PROFESSOR CALVIN STOWE

From a photograph taken in 1847, shortly  
before the writing of "Uncle  
Tom's Cabin"





PROFESSOR STOWE AT  
ABOUT FORTY

HARRIET BEECHER  
STOWE IN 1880

the man how to nail the carpet in the corner. He's nailed it all crooked; what shall he do?'

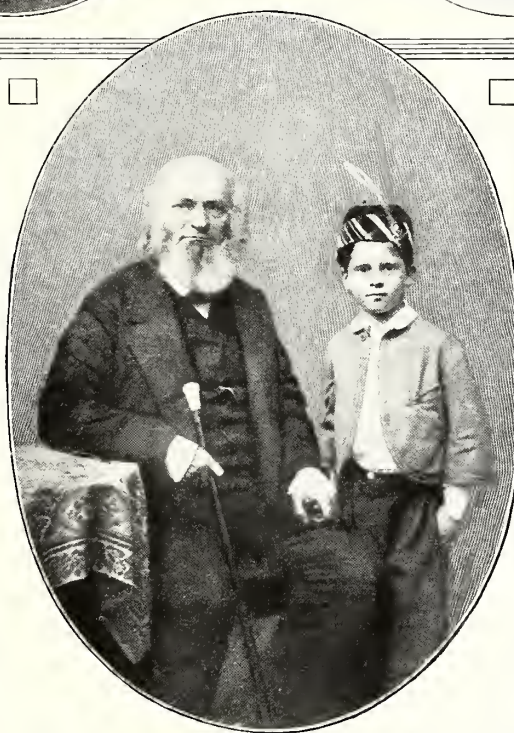
"The black thread is all used up; what shall I do about putting gimp on the back of that sofa?'

"Mrs. Stowe, there is a man come with a lot of pails and tin-ware from Furbish; will you settle the bill now?'

"Mrs. Stowe, here is a letter just come from Boston inclosing that bill of lading; the man wants to know what he shall do with the goods. If you will tell me what to say, I will answer the letter for you.'

"Mrs. Stowe, the meat-man is at the door. Hadn't we better get a little beef-steak or something for dinner?'

"Then comes a letter from my husband, saying that he is sick abed, and all but dead; don't ever expect to see his family again; wants



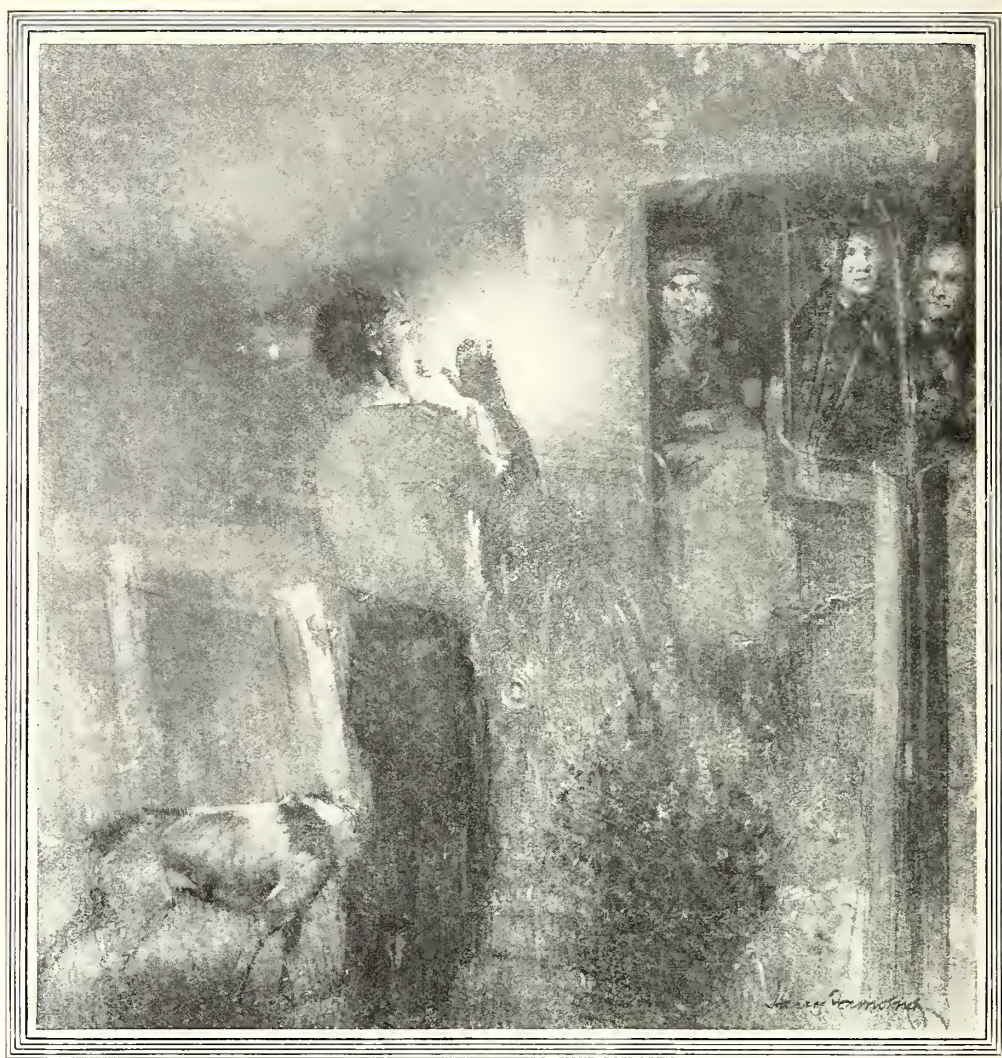
MRS. STOWE'S HUSBAND, PROFESSOR CALVIN STOWE,  
AND HER SON, CHARLES EDWARD, AT  
THE AGE OF ELEVEN

they bring oil in, which here in Brunswick are often used for cisterns, and had them brought up in triumph to my yard, and was congratulating myself on my energy, when, lo and behold! it was discovered that there was no cellar door except the one in the kitchen,

to know how I shall manage in case I am left a widow; knows that we shall get in debt and never get out; wonders at my courage; thinks that I am very sanguine; warns me to be prudent, as there won't be much to live on in case of his death, etc., etc., etc. I read the letter, and poke it into the stove, and proceed. . . .

"Some of my adventures were quite funny; as, for example: I had in my kitchen elect no sink, cistern, or any other water privileges, so I bought at the cotton factory two of the great hogsheads that





*Drawing by Harry Townsend*

“PROFESSOR STOWE SANG OUT: ‘ARE YOU THE MAN WHO WILL SHELTER A POOR WOMAN AND HER CHILD FROM SLAVE-CATCHERS?’”

which was truly a strait and narrow way down a long flight of stairs. Hereupon, as saith John Bunyan, ‘I fell into a muse’— how to get my cisterns into my cellar. In the days of chivalry I might have got me a knight to make me a breach through the foundation walls; but that was not to be thought of now, and my oil hogsheads standing disconsolately in the yard seemed to reflect no great credit on my foresight. In this strait, I fell upon a real honest Yankee cooper, whom I besought, for the reputation of his craft and mine, to take my hogsheads in pieces, and carry them down in staves, and set them up again, which the worthy man actually accomplished in one fair summer forenoon, to the great astonishment of us Yankees. When

my man came to put up the pump, he stared very hard to see my hogsheads thus translated and standing as innocently and quietly as could be in the cellar. Then I told him in a very quiet and mild way how I got them taken to pieces and put together again, just as if I had been always in the habit of doing such things.

“Professor Smith came down and looked very hard at them, and then said, ‘Well, nothing can beat a wilful woman!’”

“In all my moving and fussing Mr. Titcomb has been my right-hand man. This same John Titcomb, my very good friend, is a character peculiar to Yankeedom. He is part-owner and landlord of the house I rent, and connected by birth with all the best families in town — a man



of real intelligence and good education, a great reader, and quite a thinker. . . . Whenever a screw was loose, a nail to be driven, a lock to be mended, a pane of glass to be set,—and these cases were manifold,—he was always on hand. My sink, however, was no fancy job, and I believe that nothing but a very particular friendship would have moved him to undertake it. How many times I have entered his shop, and seated myself in one of the old rocking-chairs, and talked first of the news of the day, the railroad, the last proceedings in Congress, the probabilities about the millennium, and thus brought the conversation by little and little round to my sink; because, till the sink was done, the pump could not be put up, and we couldn't have any rain water. Sometimes my courage quite failed me to introduce the subject, and I would talk of everything else, turn and get out of the shop, and then come back, as if a thought had just struck my mind, and say:

"Mr. Titcomb, about that sink?"

"Yes, ma'am; I was thinking about going down street this afternoon to look out stuff for it."

"Yes, sir, if you would be good enough to get it done as soon as possible; we are in great need of it."

"I think there's no hurry. I believe we are going to have a dry time now, so that you could not catch any water, and you won't need the pump at present."

"These negotiations extended from the first of June to the first of July, and at last my sink was completed, as also was a new house-spout, concerning which I had divers communings with Deacon Dunning of the Baptist church."

"Also, during this time, good Mrs. Mitchell and myself made two sofas, or lounges, a barrel-chair, divers bedspreads, pillow-cases, pillows, bolsters, mattresses; we painted rooms; we re-varnished furniture; we — what *didn't* we do?"

"Then came Mr. Stowe, and then came the eighth of July, and my little Charley. I was really glad for an excuse to lie in bed, for I was full tired, I can assure you. Well, I was what folks call very comfortable for two weeks, when my nurse had to leave me."

"During this time I have employed my leisure hours in making up my engagements with newspaper editors. I have written more than anybody or I myself would have thought to be possible. I have taught an hour a day in our school, and I have read two hours every evening to the children. The children study English history in school, and I am reading Scott's historical novels with them in their order. To-night I finish 'The Abbot,' and shall begin 'Kenilworth' next week. Yet I am constantly

pursued and haunted by the idea that I don't do anything.

"Since I began this note, I have been called off at least a dozen times: once for the fish-man, to buy codfish; once to see a man who had brought me some barrels of apples; once to see a book-agent; then to Mrs. Upham's to see about a drawing I promised to make for her; then to nurse the baby; then into the kitchen to make a chowder for dinner; and now I am at it again, for nothing but deadly determination enables me ever to write; it is rowing against wind and tide."

While all this was going on in Brunswick, her brother's family in Boston were consumed with righteous indignation over the workings of the Fugitive-Slave Law.

Mrs. Stowe received letter after letter from Mrs. Edward Beecher and other friends, picturing the heartrending scenes that were the inevitable results of the enforcement of this inhuman law. Cities were better adapted than the country to the work of capturing escaped slaves, and Boston, called the "Cradle of Liberty," opened her doors to slave-hunters.

Mrs. Edward Beecher, writing of this period to Mrs. Stowe's youngest son, says:

"I had been nourishing an anti-slavery spirit since Lovejoy was murdered for publishing in his paper articles against slavery and intemperance, when our home was in Illinois. These terrible things that were going on in Boston were well calculated to rouse up this spirit. 'What can I do?' I thought. 'Not much myself, but I know one who can.' So I wrote several letters to your mother, telling her of the various heartrending events caused by the enforcement of the Fugitive-Slave Law. I remember distinctly saying in one of them: 'Now, Hattie, if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something that would make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is!'"

"God Helping Me, I Will Write!"

A daughter of Mrs. Stowe well remembered her whole life long the scene in the little parlor in Brunswick when this letter was received and read. Mrs. Stowe read it aloud to the assembled family, and when she came to the words, "I would write something that would make this whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is," rising from her chair and crushing the letter in her hand, she exclaimed, with an expression on her face that stamped itself permanently on the minds of her children:

"God helping me, I will write something. I will if I live!"

McClure Apr. 1911

This purpose, though then definitely formed, could not be immediately carried out. In a letter written in the month of December, 1850, she refers to the matter in a way that shows how it weighed upon her mind:

"Tell sister Katy that I thank her for her letter, and will answer it. As long as the baby sleeps with me nights, I can't do much at anything; but I will do it at last. I will write that thing, if I live!

"What are folks in general saying about the slave law, and the stand taken by Boston ministers in general, except Edward?

"To me it is incredible, amazing, mournful! I feel that I should be willing to sink with it,

were all this sin and misery to sink in the sea.

. . . I wish father would come on to Boston and preach on the Fugitive-Slave Law, as he once preached on the slave trade, when I was a little girl in Litchfield. I sobbed aloud in one pew, and Mrs. Judge Reeve in another. I wish some Martin Luther would arise to set this community right."

At this time Mrs. Stowe was not an Abolitionist, nor did she ever become one after the Garrisonian type. She remembered hearing her father say about Garrison and Wendell Phillips that they were like men that would burn their houses down to get rid of the rats. She was virtually in sympathy with her father on the subject of slavery, and had unlimited confidence in his judgment.

#### *Expected "Uncle Tom" to Please the South*

She wished to be more than fair to the South. She intended to be generous. She made two of Uncle Tom's three masters men of good character, amiable, kind, and generous.

She tried to show that the fault was not with the Southern people, but with the system. A friend of hers, who had many friends in the South, wrote to her: "Your book is going to be the great pacificator; it will unite North and South."

Mrs. Stowe did not expect that the Abolitionists would be satisfied with the story, but she confidently expected that it would be favorably received in the South. Great was her surprise, then, when from the whole South arose a storm of abuse, while the Abolitionists received her with open arms. Mr. Garrison wrote: "Since 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' has been published, all the defenders of slavery have let me alone and are spending their strength in abusing you."



MRS. STOWE'S BROTHER, HENRY WARD BEECHER, AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE, WHEN HE MADE HIS LAST VISIT TO ENGLAND

It was in the winter of 1850 that she wrote to her husband, who was in Cincinnati, giving a vivid picture of her life in the old wind-swept castle of a house in Brunswick:

"Sunday night I rather watched than slept. The wind howled, and the house rocked, just as our old Litchfield house used to do. . . . I am projecting a sketch for the *Era* on the capacity of liberated blacks to take care of themselves. Can't you find out for me how much

Willie Watson has paid for the liberation of his friends? Get any items of that kind that you can pick up in Cincinnati. . . .

"When I have a headache, and feel sick, as I do to-day, there is actually not a place in the house where I can lie down and take a nap without being disturbed. Overhead is the school-room; next door is the dining-room, and the girls practise there two hours a day on the piano. If I lock my door and lie down, some one is sure to be rattling the latch before two minutes have passed. . . .

"There is no doubt in my mind that our expenses this year will come two hundred dollars, if not three, beyond our salary. We shall be



able to come through notwithstanding; but I don't want to feel obliged to work as hard every year as I have this. I can earn four hundred dollars a year by writing; but I don't want to feel that I must, when weary with teaching the children, and tending the baby, and buying provisions, and mending dresses, and darning stockings, sit down and write a piece for some paper."

that the editor of the *Era* was overstocked with contributors and would not want my services another year, and, lo, he sends me one hundred dollars, and ever so many good words with it. Our income this year will be seventeen hundred dollars in all, and hope to bring our expenses within thirteen hundred."



HARRIET BEECHER STOWE AT THE TIME SHE WAS WRITING  
"POGANUC PEOPLE," HER LAST SERIAL NOVEL

Again she writes:

"Ever since we left Cincinnati to come here, the good hand of God has been visibly guiding our way. Through what difficulties have we been brought! Though we knew not where means were to come from, yet means have been furnished at every step of the way, and in every time of need. I was just, in some discouragement with regard to my writing, thinking

About the last of January, 1850, she went to Boston to visit her brother Edward, and there she met, for the first time, the Rev. Joshua Hensen. She heard his story of his escape from slavery. He remembered seeing his own father lying on the ground, bruised, bloody, and dying from the blows of a white overseer, because, mere slave and "nigger" that he was, he had pretended that the mother of his children was

his wife, and had tried to defend her from an indecent assault that this same overseer had attempted on her person. What struck her most forcibly in Hensen's story was the sweet Christian spirit of the man, as manifested even when he spoke of injuries calculated to rouse a human being to a frenzy of vindictive revengefulness.

### *Writing "The Death of Uncle Tom"*

Shortly after this visit to Boston, Mrs. Stowe was seated in her pew in the college church at Brunswick during the communion service. She was alone with her children, her husband having gone away to deliver a course of lectures. Suddenly, like the unrolling of a picture scroll, the scene of the death of Uncle Tom seemed to pass before her. At the same time, the words of Jesus were sounding in her ears: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

That Sunday afternoon she went to her room, locked the door, and wrote out, substantially as it appears in the published editions, the chapter called "The Death of Uncle Tom." As sufficient paper was not at hand, she wrote a large part of it in pencil on some brown-paper bags in which groceries had been delivered. It seemed to her as if what she wrote was blown through her mind as with the rushing of a mighty wind. In the evening she gathered her little family about her and read them what she had written. Her two little boys of ten and twelve burst into tears, sobbing out, "Oh, mama, slavery is the most cruel thing in the world!" This was the beginning of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." She was not apparently conscious of what she had done, nor did she immediately consider making use of the fragment she had written.

Her mind was apparently so absorbed by pressing domestic duties that what she had written was laid at one side and for the time forgotten. She did not even show it to her husband, on his return from his lecture trip. One day she found him dissolved in tears over the bits of brown-paper bags on which she had written the first words of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Largely at his suggestion, she determined to write a serial story, the climax of which was to be the death of Uncle Tom. Some weeks slipped by before she wrote the first instalment of the proposed novel. In the meantime she had written to Gamaliel Bailey, editor of the *National Era*, an Abolition paper published in Washington, D. C., that she contemplated a serial story under the title, "Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly," and asking if it would be acceptable to the *Era*.

### *Hoped She'd Get a New Silk Dress Out of the Book*

Neither Mrs. Stowe nor her husband had the remotest idea of the unique power and interest of the story that was being written. Nor, indeed, did it dawn upon either of them until after the publication of the first edition in book form. Professor Stowe was a very emotional man, and was accustomed to water his wife's literary efforts quite liberally with his tears; so the fact that he had wept over the bits of brown paper had for them no unusual portent. As to pecuniary gain, he often expressed the hope that she would make money enough by the story to buy a new silk dress.

It was a jolly, rollicking household in Brunswick, and Mrs. Stowe was herself full of fun. It was during the writing of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" that there occurred the following incident characteristic of the family life. Professor Stowe was at heart one of the most genial of men; but, being of an exceedingly nervous temperament, he was liable to go off at half cock on the slightest provocation, and become for the time being unpleasantly peppery. One day he bought a dozen eggs to set under a brooding hen, with a view to producing an unusually fine lot of chickens. Without disclosing his purpose, he hid the eggs, as he thought securely, in the wood-shed. One of the children discovered them, and bore them in triumph into the house. Mrs. Stowe was on the point of sending to the store for eggs, and, looking upon this discovery as providential, took them and had them cooked. When the Professor returned from one of his lectures, he felt himself the most abused of men when he sought his eggs and found them not, and vented his wrath upon his innocent household in a form at once dramatic and picturesque. Then off he went to another lecture, in a forbidding frame of mind.

"Pa's mad!" observed one of the children.

"I tell you what we'll do, children. When he comes back to dinner, we will make him laugh and he'll get all over it!" said Mrs. Stowe, with a roguish twinkle in her eye. The Professor returned, and found the dinner on the table, ready and waiting, but not one of the family visible. While speculating on this unusual state of affairs, he heard a very human imitation of the cackling of hens proceeding from the wood-shed. It made up in vigor what it lacked in genuineness. On investigation, he found his wife and all the children, and even Rover, the dog, perched on a beam, after the manner peculiar to hens. He burst into laughter, and they all trooped into the house and had a very jolly time at dinner.





THE STOWE COTTAGE AT MANDARIN, FLORIDA  
IN THE FOREGROUND ARE SHOWN HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, SEATED ON THE TRUNK OF A  
TREE, HER HUSBAND, PROFESSOR STOWE, MRS. HENRY WARD BEECHER,  
AND MISS ELIZA STOWE

### *Letters to Fred Douglass*

"Uncle Tom's Cabin" began as a serial in the *National Era* June 5, 1851, and in July of the same year Mrs. Stowe wrote as follows to Frederick Douglass:

"You may perhaps have noticed in your editorial readings a series of articles that I am furnishing for the *Era*, under the title of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life Among the Lowly.'

"In the course of my story the scene will fall upon a cotton plantation. I am very desirous, therefore, to gain information from one who has been an actual laborer on one, and it occurred to me that in the circle of your acquaintance there might be one who would be able to communicate to me such information as I desire."

Then, after a vigorous defense of churches and ministers whom Douglass had assailed, she continues:

"I am a minister's daughter, and a minister's wife, and I have had six brothers in the ministry (one is in heaven); I certainly ought to know something of the feelings of ministers on this subject.

"I was a child in 1820, when the Missouri

question was agitated, and one of the strongest and deepest impressions on my mind was that made by my father's sermons and prayers, and the anguish of his soul for the poor slave at that time. I remember his preaching drawing tears down the hardest faces of the old farmers of his congregation.

"I remember his prayers, morning and evening, in the family, for 'poor oppressed, bleeding Africa,' that the time of her deliverance might come; prayers offered with strong crying and tears, prayers that indelibly impressed my heart, and made me, what I am, the enemy of all slavery."

### *Mulatto Cook Told Mrs. Stowe "About Life "Down the River"*

In a letter written to Mrs. Follen in February, 1853, after the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Mrs. Stowe throws additional light on the way in which that Cabin was built out of the sorrows and experiences of her own life. Speaking of her life in Cincinnati, she writes:

"A number of poor families settled in our vicinity, from whom we could occasionally ob-

tain domestic service. About a dozen families of liberated slaves were among the number, and they became my favorite resort in cases of emergency. My cook, Eliza Buck, was a regular epitome of slave life in herself — fat, gentle, easy, loving and lovable, always calling my very modest house and door-yard 'The Place,' as if it had been a plantation with seven hundred hands on it. She had lived through the whole sad story of a Virginia-raised slave's life. In her youth she must have been a very handsome mulatto girl. Her voice was sweet, and her manners refined and agreeable. She was raised in a good family as a nurse and seamstress. When the family became embarrassed, she was suddenly sold on to a plantation in Louisiana. She has often told me how, without any warning, she was suddenly forced into a carriage, and saw her little mistress screaming and stretching her arms from a window toward her as she was driven away. She has told me of scenes on the Louisiana plantation, and she has often been out at night by stealth, ministering to poor slaves who had been mangled and lacerated by the lash. Then she was sold into Kentucky, and her last master was the father of all her children. On this point she always maintained a delicacy and reserve that seemed to me remarkable. She always called him her husband, and it was not till after she had lived with me some years that I discovered the real nature of the connection.

"I shall never forget how sorry I felt for her, nor my feelings at her humble apology, 'You know, Mrs. Stowe, slave women cannot help themselves.' She had two very pretty quadroon daughters, with her hair and eyes — interesting children, whom I instructed in the family school with my own children. Time would fail to tell you all that I learned incidentally of the slave system in the history of various slaves who came into my family, and of the Underground Railway, which, I may say, ran through our house."

*The Strength of the Book from Her  
Own Suffering*

Later in this same letter she connects intimately the writing of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" with her own griefs and bereavements. "I have been the mother of seven children, the most beautiful and most loved of whom lies buried near my Cincinnati residence. It was at his dying bed and at his grave that I learned what a poor slave mother may feel when her child is torn away from her. In these depths of sorrow, which seemed to me immeasurable, it was my only prayer to God that such anguish might not

be suffered in vain. There were circumstances about his death of such peculiar bitterness, of what seemed almost cruel suffering, that I felt that I could never be consoled for it, unless this crushing of my own heart might enable me to work out some great good to others. I allude to this here, for I have often felt that much that is in that book, 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' had its root in the awful scenes and bitter sorrows of that summer. It has left now, I trust, no trace on my mind except a deep compassion for the sorrowful, especially for mothers who are separated from their children."

Such is Mrs. Stowe's own account of where and how she gained the material and the inspiration for writing "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The book was written mostly in Brunswick, Maine. Some of the chapters were written in Boston, while she was visiting her brother, Edward Beecher, and part of the concluding chapter in Andover. Begun as a serial in the *National Era*, June 5, 1851, and announced to run for but three months, it was not completed till April 1, 1852, and was published in book form March 20 of the same year.

John P. Jewett, a young publisher of Boston, made overtures for the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in book form long before it was finished as a serial in the *National Era*. The contract was finally signed March 13, 1852. Not long before this, Mr. Jewett wrote Mrs. Stowe, expressing the fear that she was making the story too long for one volume. He reminded her that the subject was unpopular, and that, while one short volume might possibly sell, two volumes might prove a fatal obstacle to the success of the book. Mrs. Stowe replied that she did not make the story, that the story made itself, and that she could not stop it till it was done.

*Family Lawyer Predicted Small Sale*

Mr. Jewett offered her either ten per cent on all sales, or half profits, with half the risk in case the venture proved unprofitable. Professor and Mrs. Stowe had for their business adviser Mr. Philip Greeley, who had formerly been Collector of the Port of Boston and was then a member of Congress. On this matter, without reading the story, he strongly advised them to accept the ten per cent on all sales, and to take no risk whatever in the enterprise. He reasoned that the subject was very unpopular, and that a book written by a woman could not be expected to have a very large sale in any case. Dr. Stowe took the first copy of the first edition to the railroad station and put it into Mr. Greeley's hands just as he was leaving for Washington. Greeley



was a sedate and self-contained man—a characteristically unemotional New Englander. Afterward he wrote to Professor Stowe that he began the book shortly after the train pulled out of the station, and that as he read he began to cry. He was humiliated. He had never before shed tears over a novel, still less over the work of a woman. Once he had begun it, he could not stop reading, nor could he keep the tears back as he read. Consequently, on reaching Springfield, he left the train and went to a hotel, took a room, and sat up till he finished the book in the early hours of the morning.

## II

One apparently trivial incident in Mrs. Stowe's life plowed itself so deeply into her memory that it left an enduring impression. It was at the time when she, with her five little children, was making her way alone from Cincinnati to Brunswick. Unconsciously early one morning she found herself at a railroad station where she must wait three weary hours for the next train. She sat on her baggage, her children grouped about her, looking, according to her own testimony, extremely shabby and disconsolate. In this attitude she was discovered by a brisk and self-important little station-agent, who evidently regarded her with suspicion as an undesirable citizen, and questioned her with extreme asperity of manner as to where she came from and whither she was going. When she had answered quietly and briefly, the peremptory little functionary strode away and left her with an unreasonable but keen consciousness of her own insignificance. This was Harriet Beecher Stowe two years before the writing of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." That this brisk little watch-dog of respectability felt called upon to bark at her struck her sense of humor, and she often told of it with a twinkle in her eye.

The Apostle Paul himself could not have had a keener sense of his own weakness according to the flesh than had Mrs. Stowe. "So you want to know something about what sort of a woman I am!" she wrote Mrs. Follen, immediately after the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." "Well, if this is any object, you shall have statistics free of charge. To begin, then, I am a little bit of a woman, somewhat more than forty, about as thin and dry as a pinch of snuff; never very much to look at in my best days, and looking like a used-up article now." This was the Harriet Beecher Stowe that the aggressive little station-master found sitting on her luggage with her five children about her in the dim and misty dawn of an April morning in the year 1850.

## 300,000 Copies Sold within the First Year

Looking back on that time more than thirty years afterward, she writes:

"'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was published March 20, 1852. The despondency of the author as to whether anybody would read or attend to her appeal was soon dispelled. Ten thousand copies were sold in a few days, and over three hundred thousand within a year, and eight power presses running day and night were barely able to keep pace with the demand for it. It was read everywhere, apparently, and by everybody, and she soon began to hear echoes of sympathy from all over the land. The indignation, the pity, the distress, that had long weighed upon her soul seemed to pass off from her and into the readers of the book."

It was like the kindling of a mighty conflagration, that swept all before it, and even crossed the broad ocean, till it seemed as if the whole world scarcely thought or talked of anything else. Then multitudes began to ask who had done this thing. And, lo, when the dust of this mighty commotion had settled to earth, there stood outlined against the great light "a little bit of a woman about as thin and dry as a pinch of snuff." That was Harriet Beecher Stowe. Like the noise of mighty winds, like the rushing of the waters, there arose from the earth a tumult of human voices. There was the voice of weeping, and the cry of those who said, "Can nothing be done to banish this accursed thing off the face of the earth?" Then followed the outburst of rage, hatred, and defiance. There came to Mrs. Stowe letters "so curiously compounded of blasphemy, cruelty, and obscenity that their like could only be expressed by John Bunyan's account of the speech of Apollyon: 'He spake as a dragon.'"

Let us hear again what Mrs. Stowe herself said:

"For a time, after it ["Uncle Tom's Cabin"] was issued, it seemed to go by acclamation. From quarters most unexpected, from all political parties, came a most unbroken chorus of approbation. I was very much surprised, for I knew the explosive nature of the subject. It was not till the sale had run to over a hundred thousand copies that reaction began, and the reaction was led off by the *London Times*. Instantly, as by a preconcerted signal, all papers of a certain class began to abuse; and some who had at first issued articles entirely commendatory now issued others equally depreciatory. Religious papers, notably the *New York Observer*, came out and denounced the book as



*Courtesy of Houghton Mifflin Company*

THE HOUSE IN BRUNSWICK, MAINE, WHERE "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN" WAS WRITTEN

anti-Christian, anti-evangelical, resorting even to personal slander of the author as a means of diverting attention from the work.

"My book . . . is as much under an interdict in some parts of the South as the Bible in Italy. It is not allowed in the book-stores, and the greater part of the people hear of it and me only through grossly caricatured representations in the papers, with garbled extracts from the book.

"A cousin residing in Georgia this winter says that the prejudice against me is so strong that she dares not have my name appear on the outside of her letters, and that very amiable and excellent people have asked her if such as I could be received into reputable society at the North.

#### *Book Roused a Storm of Feeling Abroad*

"The storm of feeling that the book raises in Italy, Germany, and France is all good, though truly 'tis painful for us Americans to bear."

Within a year the obscure little woman had become a figure of international importance. Not only had her book been universally read, but it had been taken so seriously as to become a great political and moral force in the world.

How was she herself affected by this dazzlingly sudden transition from the quiet obscurity in which she had hitherto passed her

days to this prodigious fame? One might almost say that she was not affected at all! As Mrs. Fields has most truly said, in the "Life and Letters": "The sense that a great work had been accomplished through her only made her, if possible, less self-conscious."

As her renown flowed in upon her from without, it was constantly met by that deeper and stronger tide which welled up from the depths of her own soul. Professor Stowe had at this time accepted a chair at the Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts. She writes to him from Andover, speaking of the home that they are to have there:

"It seems almost too good to be true, that we are to have such a house, in such a beautiful place, and to live here among all these agreeable people, where everybody seems to love you so much, and think so much of you.

"I am almost afraid to accept it, and should not, did I not see the Hand that gives it all, and know that it is both firm and true.

"He knows if it is best for us, and His blessing addeth no sorrow therewith. I cannot describe to you the constant undercurrent of love and joy and peace ever flowing through my soul. I am so happy — so blessed!"

It was this undercurrent of love, joy, and peace that, about this time, found expression in that hymn by which Mrs. Stowe is per-



haps as favorably known as by anything she wrote:

Still, still with Thee when purple morning breaketh,  
When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee,  
Fairer than morning, lovelier than the daylight,  
Dawns the sweet consciousness I am with Thee.

One month after the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" she wrote to her husband: "It is not fame nor praise that contents me. I seem never to have needed love so much as now. I long to hear you say how much you love me."

There could be no truer picture of her inner life than she herself has given in that restful hymn:

When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,  
And billows wild contend with angry roar,  
'Tis said far down beneath the wild commotion  
That peaceful stillness reigneth evermore.

So this woman, whose name was on every tongue, whose words were being translated into nearly every language and read in every land, lived in the midst of it all, hid as in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

#### *Reception in England*

Not many months after the book was published, Professor and Mrs. Stowe accepted the invitation of the friends of the cause of emancipation in England to visit that country as their guest. When they landed at Liverpool, Mrs. Stowe was astonished to find a crowd waiting at the pier — so little had it ever dawned upon her that she was a person of importance. "I had an early opportunity of making an acquaintance with my English brethren; for, much to my astonishment, I found quite a crowd on the wharf, and we walked up to our carriage through a long lane of people, bowing, and looking very glad to see us." She left Liverpool "with a heart a little tremulous and excited by the vibration of an atmosphere of universal sympathy and kindness." At Locherbie it is with a strange kind of thrill "she hears her name inquired for in the Scottish accent. Men, women, and children are gathered, and hand after hand is presented with the hearty greeting, 'Ye're welcome to Scotland.'"

Of the many kindnesses offered her that she could not accept or return, she says: "For all these kindnesses what could I give in return? There was scarce time for even a grateful thought on each. People have often said to me that it must have been an exceeding bore. For my part, I could not think of regarding it so. It only oppressed me with an unutterable sadness." She writes of her visit to the Edinburgh Cathed-

ral: "As I saw the way to the cathedral blocked up by a throng of people that had come out to see me, I could not help saying, 'What went ye out for to see: a reed shaken with the wind?' In fact, I was so worn out that I could hardly walk through the building. The next morning I was so ill as to need a physician." Everywhere her life is a constant fight with physical exhaustion. She consoles herself with the reflection: "Everybody seems to understand how good-for-nothing I am; and yet, with all this consideration, I have been obliged to keep my room and bed for a good part of the time. Of the multitudes that have called, I have seen scarcely any." She reflects in this connection, "What a convenience in sight-seeing it would be if one could have a relay of bodies, as of clothes, and slip from one into the other."

#### *People Walked Many Miles to See Her*

Nothing pleased her so much as the sympathy and appreciation everywhere shown by the working-people. She speaks with genuine pleasure of putting her hand "into the great prairie of a palm" of one of the Duke of Argyle's farmers who had read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and walked many miles to shake the hand of the author. She writes of the journey through Scotland:

"We rode through several villages after this, and were met everywhere with a warm welcome. What pleased me was that it was not mainly from the literary, or the rich, or the great, but the plain, common people. The butcher came out of his stall, and the baker from his shop, the miller dusty with flour, the blooming, comely young mother with her baby in her arms, all smiling and bowing, with that hearty, intelligent, friendly look, as if they knew we should be glad to see them."

Of her multitudinous engagements on this tour, which she had ingenuously looked forward to as a vacation, she writes: "As to all engagements, I am in a state of happy acquiescence, having resigned myself as a very tame lion into the hands of my keepers. Whenever the time comes for me to try to do anything, I try to behave myself as well as I can, which, as Dr. Young says, is all that an angel could do under the same circumstances." To find herself in the company of very distinguished people excites her sense of humor, and she laughs to herself: "Oh, isn't this funny, to see poor little me with all the great ones of the earth?" She writes to her husband from London about a concert at Stafford House: "The next day from my last letter came off Miss Greenfield's concert, of which I send a card. *You see in what company*

*they have put your poor little wife!* Funny — isn't it? Well, the Hons. and the Right Hons. all were there, and I sat by Lord Carlisle."

*Reception by the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland*

The most notable event in which Mrs. Stowe was the central figure, during this her first visit to England, was the reception given her by the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland at Stafford House, on the occasion when Lord Shaftesbury presented to her, in behalf of the ladies of England, an address of welcome and appreciation. When the reports of this Stafford House meeting reached America, Calhoun remarked that its chief significance lay in the fact that it would make Abolitionism fashionable.

After a partial rest in Paris, where she escaped publicity through some strategy, she went to Switzerland, where her presence became generally known, in spite of precautions, and she was hailed everywhere as *Madame Bessbare*. It was Scotland over again. All had read her book, and their enthusiasm seemed boundless. "Oh, Madame, do write another! Remember, our winter nights here are very long!" entreated the peasants in an Alpine village.

Mrs. James T. Fields of Boston, who was much associated with Mrs. Stowe at this time, in her book, "Authors and Friends," gives the following incident illustrative of Mrs. Stowe's wide popularity:

"It was my good fortune to be in Mrs. Stowe's company once, in Rome, when she came unexpectedly face to face with an exhibition of the general feeling of reverence and gratitude toward her. We had gone together to the rooms of the brothers Castellani, the world-famous workers in gold. The collection of antique gems and the beautiful reproductions of them were new to us. Mrs. Stowe was full of enthusiasm, and we lingered long over the wonderful things that the brothers brought forward to show. Among them was the head of an Egyptian slave, carved in black onyx. It was an admirable work of art, and, while we were enjoying it, one of them said to Mrs. Stowe: 'Madame, we know what you have been to the poor slave. We ourselves are but poor slaves still in Italy. You feel for us; will you keep this gem as a slight recognition of what you have done?' She took the jewel in silence; but, when we looked for some response, her eyes were filled with tears, and it was impossible for her to speak."

Mrs. Stowe finally returned to England, whence she wrote, as she left for home: "Thus,

almost sadly, as a child might leave its home, I left the shores of kind, strong old England — the mother of us all."

*Enormous Sale of "Dred"*

On reaching home, she plunged into the thick of the Kansas and Nebraska struggle. She could think of nothing but slavery, and planned a story to be elaborated out of the material gathered in fashioning the "Key" for "Uncle Tom's Cabin." In "Dred" the didactic purpose is even more pronounced than in "Uncle Tom." Yet the book made a profound sensation in its day. Crossing again to England to secure a copyright, Mrs. Stowe wrote to her husband at Andover:

"'Dred' is selling over here wonderfully. Low says that, with all the means at his command, he has not been able to meet the demand. He sold fifty thousand in two weeks, and probably will sell as many more." And later she adds: "One hundred thousand copies of 'Dred' sold in four weeks! After that, who cares what critics say? . . . It goes everywhere, is read everywhere, and Mr. Low says that he puts the hundred and twenty-fifth thousand to press confidently. The fact that many good judges like it better than 'Uncle Tom' is success enough!"

A little later she wrote from Paris:

"It is wonderful that people here do not seem to get over 'Uncle Tom' a bit. The impression seems fresh as if just published. How often have they said, 'That book has revived the gospel among the poor of France; it has done more than all the books we have published put together. It has gone among *les ouvriers*, among the poor of Faubourg St. Antoine, and nobody knows how many have been led to Christ by it.' Is not this blessed, my dear husband? Is it not worth all the suffering of writing it?"

*Mrs. Stowe's Eldest Son Drowned*

Mrs. Stowe returned from this second trip to Europe to meet the supreme sorrow of her life — the death of her eldest son, Henry Stowe. One beautiful summer day in the year 1857, while swimming in the Connecticut River near Hanover, New Hampshire, where he was a student in Dartmouth College, he was seized with a cramp. He threw his arms about a classmate who tried to save him, and both sank together. As they rose to the surface, the friend cried out, "You're drowning me, Henry!" Immediately he relaxed his grasp, and sank to rise no more.

His mother was away on a visit when a telegram summoned her home. His classmates had



just arrived with his body. As she looked upon his strong, peaceful young face, it was impossible for her to realize that her voice, which had ever had such power over him, could never now recall him. As she wrote to the Duchess of Sutherland, whom she and Henry had visited together only a few months before: "There had always been such union, such peculiar tenderness, between us. I had had such power always to call up answering feelings to my own, that it seemed impossible that he could be unmoved at my grief." No one had understood her as he had. No one had treated her with such constant and chivalrous tenderness. Her strange lapses of memory often excited outbursts of nervous irritability from other members of the family, but never from him. "A dreadful faintness of sorrow" came over her at times. As she went about the house, the pictures of which he was fond, the presents she had bought him, the photographs she was to show him, all pierced her heart. She writes that she would have been glad; "like the woman in the St. Bernard, to lie down with her arms around the wayside cross, and sleep away into a brighter scene."

"Henry's fair, sweet face looks down upon me now and then from out a cloud, and I feel again all the bitterness of the eternal 'No!' which says that I must never, never in this life see that face, and lean on that arm, hear that voice."

She wrote from Hanover, where she was visiting shortly after Henry's death:

"A poor, deaf old slave woman, who has still five children in bondage, came to comfort me. 'Bear up, dear soul,' she said; 'you must bear it, for the Lord loves ye.' She went on to say: 'Sunday is a heavy day to me, 'cause I can't work, an' I can't hear preachin', an' can't read, so I

can't keep my mind off my poor children. Some on 'em the blessed Master's got, and they's safe; but oh, the're five I don't know where they are.'

"What are our mother sorrows to this?" exclaims Mrs. Stowe. "I shall try to search out and redeem these children. . . . Every sorrow I have, every lesson on the sacredness of family love, makes me the more determined to resist to the last this dreadful evil that makes so many mothers so much deeper mourners than I ever can be."

In November, 1862, Mrs. Stowe accepted an invitation to visit Washington and attend the great Thanksgiving dinner provided for the thousands of fugitive slaves who had flocked to the city. It was then she had her interview with Lincoln.\* In telling of this interview afterward, Mrs. Stowe dwelt particularly on the rustic pleasantries with which that great man received her. She was introduced into a cozy room where the President was seated before an open fire, for the day was damp and chilly. It was Mr. Seward who introduced her, and Mr. Lincoln rose awkwardly from his chair, saying, "Why, Mrs. Stowe, right glad to see you!" Then, with a humorous twinkle in his eye, he said: "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war! Sit down, please!" he added, as he seated himself once more before the fire, meditatively warming his immense hands over the smoldering embers by first extending the palms, and then turning his wrists so that the grateful warmth reached the backs of his hands. The first thing he said was: "I do love an open fire. I always had one to home."

\* Mr. Charles Edward Stowe, one of the authors of this article, accompanied his mother on this visit to Lincoln, and remembers the occasion distinctly.



THE MONUMENT TO HARRIET BEECHER  
STOWE AND HENRY WARD BEECHER,  
IN LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT,  
THEIR BIRTHPLACE

# “THE OULD LAD”

BY

MOIRA O'NEILL

I MIND meself a wee boy wi' no plain talk,  
An' standin' not the height o' two peats;  
There was things meself consated 'or the time that I  
could walk,  
An' who's to tell when wit an' childer meets?  
'Twas the daisies down in the low grass,  
The stars high up in the skies,  
The first I knowed of a mother's face  
Wi' the kind love in her eyes,  
Och, och!  
The kind love in her eyes.

I went the way of other lads that's neither good nor bad,  
An' still, d'ye see, a lad has far to go;  
But the things meself consated when I wasn't sick nor sad,  
They're aisy told, an' little use to know.  
'Twas whiles a boat on the say beyont,  
An' whiles a girl on the shore,  
An' whiles a scrape o' the fiddle-strings,  
Or maybe an odd thing more,  
In troth!  
Maybe an odd thing more.

A man, they say, in spite of all, is bettther for a wife,  
In-undher this ould roof I live me lone;  
I never seen the woman yet I wanted all me life,  
An' I never made me pillow on a stone.  
'Tis "fancy buys the ribbon" an' all,  
An' fancy sticks to the young;  
But a man of his years can do wi' a pipe,  
Can smoke an' hould his tongue,  
D'ye mind,  
Smoke an' hould his tongue.

Ye see me now an ould man, his work near done—  
Sure the hair upon me head's gone white;  
But the things meself consated 'or the time that I could run,  
They're the nearest to me heart this night.  
Just the daisies down in the low grass,  
The stars high up in the skies,  
The first I knowed of a mother's face  
Wi' the kind love in her eyes,  
Och, och!  
The kind love in her eyes.



# 44—Uncle Tom's Cabin



THE literary forces that aided in bringing about the immense revolution in public sentiment between 1852 and 1860, we may affirm with confidence that by far the most weighty was the influence spread by this book. This story, when published (1851-2) as a serial in the National Era, an anti-slavery newspaper at Washington, attracted little attention, but after it was given to the world in book form in March, 1852, it proved the most successful novel ever written. The author felt deeply that the Fugitive Slave law was unjust, and that there was cruelty in its execution; this inspired her to pour out her soul in a protest against slavery. She thought that if she could only make the world see slavery as she saw it, her object would be accomplished; she would then have induced people to think right on the subject. The book was composed under the most disheartening circumstances. Worn-out with the care of many young children; overstrained by the domestic trials of a large household, worried because her husband's small income did not meet their frugal needs; ekeing out the poor professor's salary by her literary work in a house too small to afford a study for the author—under such conditions there came the inspiration of her life. \* \* \* The effect produced by the book was immense. Whittier offered up "thanks to the Fugitive Slave law; for it gave occasion for Uncle Tom's Cabin." Longfellow thought it was one of the greatest triumphs in literary history, but its moral effect was a higher triumph still. Lowell described the impression which the book made as a "whirl of excitement." Choate is reported to have said: "That book will make two millions of abolitionists." Garrison wrote the author: "All the defenders of slavery have let me alone and are abusing you,"—J. F. RHODES.

\* \* \* \* \*

Writing only nine months after the publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin, C. F. Briggs, in Putnam's Monthly Magazine, said: "Never since books were first printed has the success of Uncle Tom been equalled; the history of literature contains nothing parallel to it, nor approaching it; it is, in fact, the first real success in bookmaking, for all other successes in literature were failures when compared with the success of Uncle Tom. \* \* \* There have been a good many books which were considered popular on their first appearance, which were widely

read and more widely talked about. But what were they all, compared with Uncle Tom, whose honest countenance now overshadows the reading world, like the dark cloud with a silver lining. Don Quixote was a popular book on its first coming out, and so was Gil Blas, and Richardson's Pamela and Fielding's Tom Jones, and Harriett More's Coelebs, and Gibbon's Decline and Fall; and so were the Vicar of Wakefield, and Rasselas, and the Tale of a Tub, and Evelina, the Lady of the Lake, Waverley, the Sorrows of Werter, Childe Harold, the Spy, Pelham, Vivian Grey, Pickwick, the Mysteries of Paris and Macaulay's History. These are among the most famous books that rose suddenly in popular esteem on their first appearance, but the united sale of the whole of them, within the first nine months of their publication, would not equal the sale of Uncle Tom in the same time. \* \* \* It is but nine months since this Iliad of the blacks, as an English reviewer calls Uncle Tom, made its appearance among books, and already its sale has exceeded a million of copies; author and publisher have made fortunes out of it, and Mrs. Stowe, who was before unknown, is as familiar a name in all parts of the civilized world as that of Homer or Shakespeare. Nearly 200,000 copies of the first edition of the work have been sold in the United States, and the publishers say they are unable to meet the growing demand. The book was published on the 20th of last March, and on the 1st of December there had been sold 120,000 sets of the edition in two volumes, 50,000 copies of the cheaper edition in one, and 3,000 copies of the costly illustrated edition. \* \* \* They (the publishers) have paid to the author \$20,300 as her share of the profits on the actual cash sales of the first nine months. But it is in England where Uncle Tom has made his deepest mark. Such has been the sensation produced by the book there, and so numerous have been the editions published, that it is extremely difficult to collect the statistics of its circulation with a tolerable degree of exactness. But we know of twenty rival editions in England and Scotland, and that millions of copies have been produced. \* \* \* We have seen it stated that there were thirty different editions published in London, within six months of the publication of the work here, and one firm keeps 400 men employed in printing and binding it. \* \* \* Uncle Tom was not long in making his way across the British Channel, and four rival editions are

claiming the attention of the Parisians, one under the title of 'Le Pere Tom,' and another of 'La Case de l'Oncle Tom.'

In May, 1852, Whittier wrote to Garrison "What a glorious work Harriet Beecher Stowe has wrought. Thanks for the Fugitive Slave Law. Better for slavery that that law had never been enacted, for it gave occasion for Uncle Tom's Cabin." \* \* \* Macaulay wrote, thanking her for the volume, assuring her of his high respect for the talent, and for the benevolence of the writer. Four years later, the same illustrious author, essayist and historian wrote to Mrs. Stowe: "I have just returned from Italy, where your fame seems to throw that of all other writers into the shade. There is no place where Uncle Tom, transformed into Il Zio Tom, is not to be found." From Lord Carlisle she received a long and earnest epistle, in which he says he felt that slavery was by far the "topping" question of the world and age, and that he returned his "deep and solemn thanks to Almighty God, who has led and enabled you to write such a book." The Rev. Charles Kingsley, in the midst of illness and anxiety, sent his thanks, saying: "Your book will do more to take away the reproach from your great and growing nation than many platform agitations and speechifying." Said Lord Palmerston: "I have not read a novel for thirty years; but I have read that book three times, not only for the story, but for the statesmanship of it." Lord Cockburn declared: "She has done more for humanity than was ever before accomplished by any single book of fiction." Within a year Uncle Tom's Cabin was scattered all over the world. Translations were made into all the principal languages, and into several obscure dialects, in number variously estimated from twenty to forty. The librarian of the British Museum, with an interest and enterprise which might well put our own countrymen to blush, has made a collection which is unique and very remarkable in the history of books. American visitors may see there thirty-five editions (Uncle Tom's Cabin) of the original English, and the complete text, and eight of abridgments and adaptations. Of translations into different languages there are nineteen, viz.: Armenian, one; Bohemian, one; Danish, two distinct versions; Dutch, one; Flemish, one; French, eight distinct versions and two dramas; German, five distinct versions, and four abridgements; Hungarian, one complete version, one for children, and one versified abridgment; Illyrian, two distinct versions; Italian, one; Polish, two distinct versions; Portuguese, one; Doman, or modern Greek, one; Russian, two distinct versions; Spanish, six distinct versions; Swedish, one; Wallachian, two distinct versions; Welsh, three distinct versions.—MRS. F. T. McCRAE

National Republican

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*C. Richard Whittemore*  
*Rare Books and First Editions*  
*Ashland, Massachusetts*

HARRIET (ELIZABETH) BEECHER STOWE

1811-1896

First Editions

1. UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. Boston, 1852. Two volumes. J. P. Jewett and Co. Foot of spine. First issue. Several loose signies in volume one, otherwise this is in original condition and a fine copy. This is the best known book ever written in America. Original plum color cloth. \$32.50
  2. A KEY TO UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. Boston, 1853. 5.00
  3. UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, or LIFE AMONG THE LOWLY. Edinburgh, 1853. Illustrated by Gilbert, Phiz, Sears. Over 100 illus. Binding worn. 4.50
  4. SUNNY MEMORIES OF FOREIGN LANDS. Boston, 1854. Two volumes. 4.00
  5. THE MAY FLOWER, AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS. Boston, 1855. Fine. 5.00
  6. DRED: A TALE OF THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP. Boston, 1856. Two volumes. Fine. 6.50
  7. OUR CHARLEY, AND WHAT TO DO WITH HIM. Boston, (1858). Loose. 3.00
  8. FATHER HENSON'S STORY OF HIS OWN LIFE. Introduction by Stowe. Boston, 1858. Fine. (Uncle Tom's Life.) 3.50
  9. THE MINISTER'S WOOING. N. Y., 1859. Fine. 2.75
  10. THE PEARL OF ORR'S ISLAND. A STORY OF THE COAST OF MAINE. Boston, 1862. Fair. 2.50
  11. LITTLE FOXES. CHRISTOPHER CROWFIELD. Boston, 1866. Fine. 3.00
  12. RELIGIOUS POEMS. Boston, 1867. Fine. 2.75
  13. THE CHIMNEY-CORNER. Boston, 1868. A little loose. Bright copy. 2.00
  14. MEN OF OUR TIME, or, LEADING PATRIOTS OF THE DAY. 18 steel plate portraits. Hartford, 1868. Fine. 3.00
  15. OLDTOWN FOLKS. Boston, 1869. (A story of Natick, Mass.) 2.50
  16. THE AMERICAN WOMAN'S HOME. Phil., 1869. 2.75
  17. LADY BYRON VINDICATED. Boston, 1870. (History of the Byron controversy.) Fine. 2.50
  18. LITTLE PUSSY WILLOW. Boston, 1870. Fine. 2.50
  19. MY WIFE AND I. Boston, 1871. 1.75
  20. PINK AND WHITE TYRANNY. Boston, 1871. 1.50
  21. OLDTOWN FIRESIDE STORIES. Boston, 1872. Illus. by Darley and others. Fine. 3.50
  22. PALMETTO LEAVES. Boston, 1873. (Florida.) 1.75
  23. WE AND OUR NEIGHBORS, or THE RECORDS OF AN UNFASHIONABLE STREET. A NOVEL. N. Y., (1875). Binding rubbed. 1.50
  24. BETTY'S BRIGHT IDEA, also, DEACON PITKIN'S FARM, and THE FIRST CHRISTMAS OF NEW ENGLAND. N. Y., 1876. 2.00
  25. POGANUC PEOPLE, THEIR LOVES AND LIVES. N. Y., (1878). Illus. Fine. 2.50
  26. FOOTSTEPS OF THE MASTER. N. Y., 1877. End paper and fly-leaf missing. 1.00
  27. AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE REV. JOSIAH HENSON. (Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Tom".) Boston, 1879. Introduction by John G. Whittier. 4.00
  28. THE LIFE OF HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, COMPOSED FROM HER LETTERS AND JOURNALS BY HER SON, CHARLES E. STOWE. Boston, 1889. 3.50
  29. LIFE AND LETTERS OF HARRIET BEECHER STOWE. Ed. by A. Fields. Boston, 1897. 3.00
- The following are not first editions, but are uncommon.
30. EARTHLY CARE, A HEAVENLY DISCIPLINE. Boston and Cleveland, 1853. Wrappers. 4.00
  31. UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. THE PLAY. 3 versions. Ames, Ohio, French, N. Y., Roorbach, N. Y., and a Synopsis. All four in original wrappers. Lot 5.00

THE AMERICAN LITERATURE SERIES (TO DATE)

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*Rare Books and First Editions*  
*Ashland, Massachusetts*



Hartford June 22.

Mr Hunt  
Dear Sir -

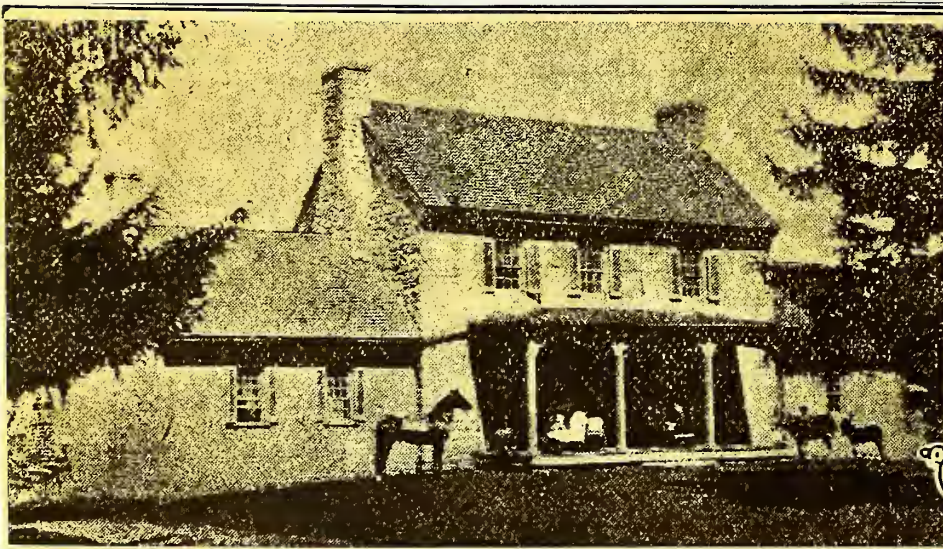
I regret that I have  
lost a letter written to me  
some years ago by Mr Watts  
sub-librarian of the British  
Museum who has the most  
complete collection of the  
translations of Uncle Tom's  
Cabin in the world. He  
showed my husband a whole  
large ~~bookcase~~ <sup>department</sup> entirely  
devoted to various editions  
of this work which he had  
collected. He informed me

[NUMBER 340]

#### ENTIRELY ABOUT "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN"

340. — A. L. s. "H. B. Stowe". 6 pp., about 510 words. Hartford, June 22, n.y. To Mr. Hunt.

A SUPERB LETTER REGARDING "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN". Reads in part as follows: "I regret that I have lost a letter written to me . . . by Mr. Watts . . . of the British Museum who has the most complete collection of the translations of Uncle Tom's Cabin in the world. He showed my husband a whole large department entirely devoted to various editions of this work which he had collected. He informed me that it was a more useful book to the student of comparative philology than any other because it had been translated into a larger number of modern languages than any other work which embodies the language of conversational common life . . ."

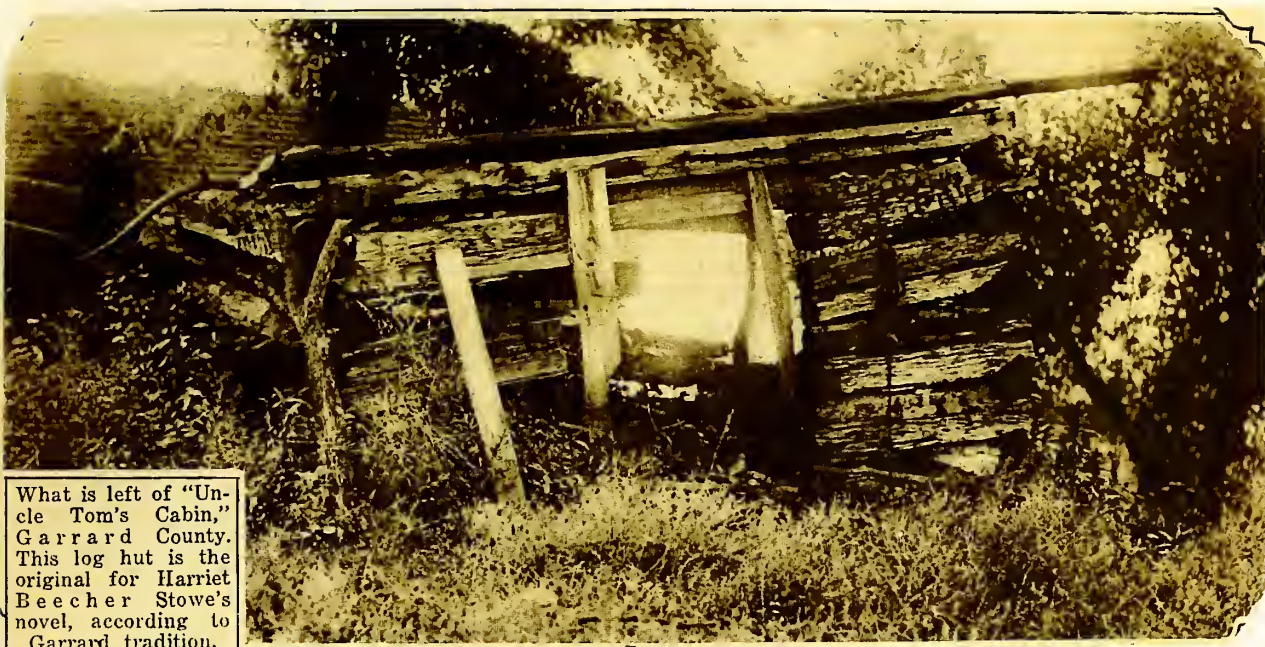


(Above) Home of Kentucky's first Governor, Isaac Shelby — "Traveler's Rest." The house burned a few years ago. (Right) (2) Susannah Hart Shelby, "first lady" of the State.



Courtesy of the Louisville Ky. 11-22-1926





What is left of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Garrard County. This log hut is the original for Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, according to Garrard tradition.



A LITTLE wisp of a woman with bright eyes and hair ringlets stepped out of the fuzzy 19th century as a 70-year-old Philadelphia lawyer prodded his memories on this Lincoln's birthday.

The lawyer is Samuel Scoville, Jr. He was thinking of his great aunt Harriet, the same lady Honest Abe studied with twinkling eyes as he was introduced to her, remarking: "Is this the little woman who started the big war?"

But Harriet Beecher Stowe never believed that her book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," helped bring on the Civil War, as numerous historians have said, Scoville declares.

"She thought the conflict was inevitable, particularly after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act, which permitted Southern slave owners to follow and reclaim slaves who had escaped to the north. She always regarded her book very modestly."

The lawyer saw his distinguished relative and talked with her many times when he was a lad. He recalls, for instance, her grief following the death of Lincoln, when she said: "It is as though the whole world has gone dark now."

#### Kept Her Head

Although her sudden literary success was one of the most amazing ever to befall a writing woman—1,000,000 copies of Uncle Tom were sold the first year—her good fortune never went to her head, recalls Scoville, an author himself, and also a naturalist in addition to his legal chores.

"She was the most unspoiled woman I ever met. She appeared to be just pleasantly surprised at her great good fortune. Yet think of this:

"At her home in Brunswick, Me., she had been a hard-working housewife, washing, cooking, caring for her children and her husband, Calvin Stowe, a college professor earning about \$800 a year. In her spare time she wrote.

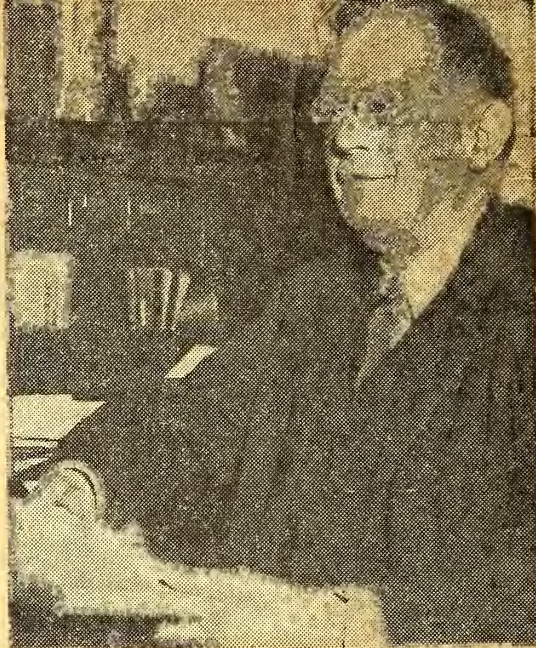
"Yet six months following publication of the book, she was dining at Buckingham Palace with Queen Victoria, chatting with Gladstone, meeting distinguished persons everywhere. Can you imagine a greater change coming into the life of an individual?"

Scoville is the grandson of Henry Ward Beecher, distinguished preacher and brother of Harriet. The lawyer's father Samuel Scoville, Sr., was assistant to Beecher at his Brooklyn Church and it was there, and at the gatherings of the family at Beecher's place, "Bosco-bel," on the Hudson, that young Scoville used to see Mrs. Stowe.

"She was a very pleasant, kind woman and quite pretty in her younger years," Scoville remembers.

#### Modest

"But sometimes she got thinking about something else and paid little attention to what was going on around her. I recall an amusing case of her abstraction one time at her home in Boston, after she had become famous.



SAMUEL SCOVILLE, Jr.

### Lincoln's Birthday Recalls Old Memories

"They were giving a party for her and she went upstairs to dress for dinner. While undressing she forgot all about the affair downstairs—and went to bed for the night! When they went up to see what had become of her, they tried to get her to dress and come downstairs again, pointing out there was a dinner in her honor.

"Oh, just go right ahead with your dinner," she told them. 'I'm not important enough to have parties in my honor.' And they never did get her to come down!"

Scoville used to be a rabid reader as a boy and his relatives did not approve of it—all except his Aunt Harriet. "Sammy, you keep on with your reading," she would tell him. "Boys who read grow up to be wise men."

Once she wrote in his autograph album, which all young people had in those days, "Trust in the Lord and do good," her favorite Psalm.

"One way you look at it," Mr. Scoville points out, "Harriet Beecher Stowe was the indirect cause of my being on earth. My father, after completing his studies at Yale, met her at Andover and she gave him a job as her amanuensis. She dictated some of her books and stories to him—she wrote

nearly a hundred. Later he accompanied her abroad and in Florence met her niece, also named Harriet. He proposed to my mother atop the Campanile tower and she always joked that she had to accept him because it was too high to escape by jumping off."

In Italy, Scoville's parents met the Brownings and Ruskin, whom Mrs. Stowe knew intimately. She was also a friend of Lady Byron, wife of the poet.

Scoville points out that he was always interested, as a lawyer, in the piece of poor advice given Mrs. Stowe by her own attorney. When she had finished her famous book, a publisher offered to print it on a 50-50 profit and expense-sharing basis, or else give her a straight 10 per cent royalty.

#### Bad Guess

"The lawyer, not dreaming of the acclaim the book would receive, advised her to take the 10 per cent. She did—and lost about half a million dollars!"

Mrs. Stowe never got royalties from dramatic presentations of Uncle Tom, yet she made probably more than \$500,000 from her book.

"She continued to dress just as simply as ever after the money started rolling in and the only evidence of her wealth were two homes she built, one in Hartford and the other in a Florida orange grove."

Mrs. Stowe's husband, a Greek and Hebrew scholar, was never jealous of his wife's success, Scoville points out, though there were amusing incidents in his life of being "Mr. Harriet Beecher Stowe."

Tourists often overran the Florida estate and once while he was reading in a grove, a curiosity seeker came in and broke off a big branch covered with orange blossoms.

Stowe ran after the man, shouting, "Drop that, you varlet, and get off this estate!"

The intruder replied blandly, "But I thought this place belonged to Harriet Beecher Stowe."

"It does," shouted her husband. "But I am the proprietor of Mrs. Stowe and also the proprietor of these grounds, sir!"

2/12/43





*Author  
Uncle Tom's Cabin*

In the successful termination of the drive to preserve and hand to posterity this historic home, a home symbolic of the finest human feelings, we were fortunate in selecting people of the highest ideals and those who continue to harbor the fine spiritual gifts of Mrs. Stowe, the author of the famous book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin."



*Home of Harriet Beecher Stowe  
2950 Gilbert Avenue, Walnut Hills  
Cincinnati, Ohio*





Transcript of notable events leading up to and subsequently confirming the transfer of The Harriet Beecher Stowe Home, 2950 Gilbert Avenue, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, Ohio,

by

GEORGE W. B. CONRAD, President,  
The Harriet Beecher Stowe Home Memorial Association.



## Our Belief



We believe in a democracy in which all are given free and unlimited opportunities to prepare themselves for the emergencies of life and that there should be no restriction or limitation on account of race, color or religion. We believe that persons should be evaluated according to the contribution they make towards human benefit and that perfect amity and goodwill should always prevail towards racial and religious groups.

We believe that good-will and better understanding should exist between labor and capital and that both should at all times work together harmoniously.

We believe that labor should be given its proper reward for what it produces and that capital should always be considerate of the man who makes his living by the sweat of his brow.

We believe that peace and arbitration should always be the medium of settling differences between capital and labor.

We believe that labor, to attain its just demands, should not discriminate against its fellow workmen on account of race, creed or color.

We believe that efforts be put forth at all times to keep from our shores those who would cause strife and sow the seed of discord in the ranks of our citizenry and that those who seek to undermine our governmental structure should be summarily dealt with.

We believe firmly in the sentiment of the Sermon on the Mount and in the underlying principles of the Golden Rule.

Finally, we believe that of "one blood all the children of men were made and thus was incorporated into one harmonious action all the estranged and repellent complexions of mankind."



## *96th General Session*

### A BILL

To direct the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society to accept the Harriet Beecher Stowe House and adjacent land in the City of Cincinnati, County of Hamilton, from the Harriet Beecher Stowe Home Memorial Association.

DR. DAVID D. TURPEAU

The members of the Association hereby extend to the State of Ohio its acknowledgment and grateful appreciation of the action of the State Legislature, through its Honored Governor, in taking over for support and maintenance, the historic old homestead of Harriet Beecher Stowe, designated as 2950 Gilbert Avenue, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, Ohio, to be converted into a Shrine and Culture Center.

This State Memorial shall be known as "The Harriet Beecher Stowe State Memorial."



ARRIET BEECHER STOWE, humanitarian and honored for her unwavering spiritual and material campaigns for justice, has been vindicated in the personages of Frederick Douglass, famous orator, diplomat and statesman. Booker T. Washington, constructionist and teacher. George Washington Carver, Scientist.

Marian Anderson, great soloist, American scientist, and by many others, including soldiers and civilians, who have offered to die, if necessary, for the preservation and maintenance of the immortal principles of Freedom, Liberty and Justice.

The tragic story of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was a spiritual awakening of the world. The principle in this human story, "Uncle Tom" was known by Mrs. Stowe and she states he represented the finest type of mankind. He exemplified, radiated and brought to light every true and noble principle of the human soul, and also aroused within us the ennobling Christian virtues, CHARITY, ENDURANCE, FIDELITY and HUMILITY. We think it is the thrilling part of the famous story, for in the sum total, he represents, radiates and beautifies the sentiment of the "SERMON ON THE MOUNT." This, we think, is the thrilling part of the celebrated story, and demonstrates and magnifies the thought uppermost in Mrs. Stowe's mind—the Dignity, Universality and Sameness of the Human Soul.

Mrs. Stowe's magnificent spirit for PEACE, FREEDOM and JUSTICE was always shown and there was never any hesitancy in making a decision when Right and Wrong were at stake.

We shall not attempt to re-write any part or portion of Mrs. Stowe's elaborate history in the interest of mankind; this would be utterly impossible. Suffice to say that the book which has immortalized Mrs. Stowe has proved so popular and humanely interesting, that we are reliably informed that it has been translated into every language, including the Chinese and Japanese. Her spiritual gifts were so rich, magnanimous in thought and appealing for the welfare of humanity, that undoubtedly her name will always be accepted as the richest and most liberal exponent of True Democracy.

We believe that in the world's present conflict for peace and justice women should play an important part. In fact something should be evolved by associated women to swing human sympathy to a new conception of world policies, directed by women instead of men. A world-wide associated effort by the women of various nations should exert a humanizing influence on all in the name of womanhood.

In the final analysis we think this home will create friendly contacts and relations between all racial groups. In reality we are human beings, differing only in characteristics.

Our predominant desire is that this home may prove a sacred, historic place, where in the lofty and eminent principles and virtues of Peace, Justice and Good-will shall ever abide. In the accomplishment of this we will be carrying out every principle of right and justice which Mrs. Stowe's life so beautifully personified.

In the way of the realization of this ambition, we wish to quote from a sympathetic lady friend of Glendale, Ohio:



"Nothing today, beyond winning the war, appeals to me as much as 'good-will' among the races. It is indeed a part of winning the war and peace to follow, and the greatest challenge facing America, is the creation of a 'True Democracy'—no discrimination amongst majorities."

The decision of Mr. Henry Ford, Sr., concerning the proper evaluation of men, is worthy of mention.

Mr. Ford's democracy transcends RACIAL lines. He believes that everyone can produce something helpful to humanity and that he should be evaluated according to the part he plays toward human progress.

The achievements of Dr. George Washington Carver, Negro Scientist, made a profound impression upon Mr. Ford, so much so, that Dr. Carver was a special guest of Mr. Ford at the latter's palatial home, near the famous "Greenfield Village" which has proven to be a place of wide interest to persons going to or passing Mr. Ford's productive plant.

When Mr. Ford learned the Harriet Beecher Stowe Home Memorial Association was campaigning to preserve Mrs. Stowe's historic home, he interested himself to congregate certain outstanding achievements of Dr. Carver as relics of the latter's beneficence to humanity. These appear in photographs which Mr. Ford had taken, and at his request will be presented to the old homestead, in honor of Mrs. Stowe.

The herein mentioned was a close friend of Dr. Carver and the attached copies of letters will disclose the character of their friendship.

Cincinnati Times-Star:

The editor of one of our daily papers recently paid a just and proper tribute to an American of humble ancestry; we refer to Dr. Carver, who has won honors as a scientist just recently through a Southern magazine. Dr. Carver demonstrates conclusively the efficacy of the great underlying principles of our form of government and the necessity of preserving at all cost the priceless heritage of every American, irrespective of race or creed. Dr. Carver would be impossible under a totalitarian or Facist government. No matter how humble one's birth may be, as an American, he may aspire to the highest honors under our democratic form of government.

Dr. Carver, like many others of his group, has proven a real benefactor of humanity. Personally he has all the mannerisms of humanity. Personally he has all the mannerisms of a truly great man; he is humble, unpretentious and unboastful. It was one of our great privileges to be his guest and escort on a visit to Tuskegee Institute a few years ago.

It was on the occasion of a jubilee when many humanitarians of our country were present to do honor to the matchless educator, Booker T. Washington. When in the presence of Dr. Carver one realized he was in the presence of an unusual man. Dr. Carver was a consistent follower of God and Nature—his handiwork, and he believed in our American way of life.

Dr. Carver's reply to Mr. Conrad was:

My dear Mr. Conrad:

This is to extend to you greeting, and to thank you for the most unusual write-up in the 'Cincinnati Times-Star.' Quite a number of persons have read it and have said that without doubt it takes the highest ground of any article they have read. I, myself, take great pleasure in telling them that if they knew you as I know you, they could not help understanding that you could not write an article that was different.

I hope that if you ever pass this way, you will stop and see the museum with its new equipment and inspect the art room.

With very good wishes,

Sincerely and gratefully yours,

(Signed) GEORGE W. CARVER.

Copy of congratulations on the preservation and ultimate maintenance of the historic home.

Letter from Dr. Lyman Beecher Stowe, grandson of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of book entitled "Saints, Sinners and Beechers."

Mr. George W. B. Conrad,

President of The Harriet Beecher Stowe Home Memorial Association:

With appreciation of your fine achievement to date and best wishes for your future success.

(Signed) LYMAN BEECHER STOWE,

Author of this book and grandson of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

1 Beekman Place, New York, N. Y.

Santa Barbara, California, March 28, 1946.

My dear Mr. Conrad:

The account of the transfer of the Harriet Beecher Stowe house to the custody of the State of Ohio, reached me out here in California. I thank you and congratulate you upon the successful conclusion of your wise and far-sighted plan. I am glad you and your associates are to collaborate with the State authorities in the development of this memorial work.

Again thanking you and wishing you every success, I am

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) LYMAN BEECHER STOWE.

My dear Mr. Conrad:

I am glad to know that you have been successful in establishing the historic home of Harriet Beecher Stowe as a State Memorial and my congratulations go to all the members of your association who have worked so hard toward this end.

I regret very much that I will not be able to be present when the property is formally conveyed to the State.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) ELEANOR ROOSEVELT.

(Telegram)

George W. B. Conrad:

Any woman would be honored to participate in the memorial for Mrs. Stowe, one of America's greatest woman authors.

I do appreciate the invitation and deeply regret my inability to accept the invitation.

CLARE BOOTHE LUCE, Member of Congress.





**PERSONAL RECORD OF GEORGE W. B. CONRAD**

(With apologies)

Approximately 52 years service with the Pennsylvania Railroad, capably filling many positions with honor to himself and with satisfaction to the railroad company.

Under date of May, 1933, was advised that his name had been placed on the "ROLL OF HONOR" by the Legal Department of the railroad.

Born in Xenia, Ohio, his early education was received at Xenia, and later at Richmond, Indiana, where he prepared for college and subsequently went to Oberlin College and the University of Michigan. To accomplish this he was furloughed by the railroad company. This was an unusual concession by the railroad company. He supported himself while in college.

#### CIVIC ACTIVITIES

President Emeritus of The Catholic Interracial Federation.

Honored by Pope Pius XII in recognition of civic activities.

Principal in the successful effort to purchase and preserve the historic home of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," former residence, No. 2950 Gilbert Avenue, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati.

Mrs. Stowe became one of the world's greatest humanitarians in writing the tragic story, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Consequently Mr. Conrad joined in an application to the State of Ohio to adopt her former home as another "Shrine of American Liberty."

Former President of the Cincinnati Branch, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Private Secretary to Col. John F. Miller, United States Commissioner, Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

Pioneer in agitation for Better Housing Conditions for the masses

Profession: Attorney and Counselor at law.

Offered position as Assistant United States District Attorney at Cincinnati.

Son of Civil War Veteran. Father, Thomas A. Conrad, enlisted in Company "B," Reg. 5, U. S. C. H. A. Honorably discharged. Status: Record of Enlistment, Free Man.

Spiritual and Religious Belief: "The One-ness of Humanity."

#### APPRECIATION

Acknowledging with the warmest feelings, the ever friendly and personal interest shown in his welfare, by Col. John F. Miller, Superintendent, General Superintendent and Vice President of The Pennsylvania Railroad.

#### CHERISHED WISH

I wish to be simple, honest, natural, frank, clean in mind and clean in body; unaffected, ready to say "I do not know" if so it be, to meet all men on an absolute equality—to face any obstacle and meet every difficulty unafraid and unabashed. I wish to live without hate, whim, jealousy, envy and fear.

To that end I pray that I may never meddle, dictate, interfere, give advice that is not wanted, nor assist when my services are not wanted or needed. If I can help people, I will do it by giving them a chance to help themselves; and if I can uplift them or inspire them, let it be by example, inference and suggestion, rather than by injunction and dictation.

I desire to Radiate Life.

—By Elbert Hubbard.

IN HONOR OF MY ESTEEMED MOTHER,  
ELIZABETH CONRAD









Mrs. Stowe, Kentucky  
and  
Uncle Tom's Cabin

By  
J. Winston Coleman, Jr.





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and  
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# MRS. STOWE, KENTUCKY, AND UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

By

J. WINSTON COLEMAN, JR.

When President Lincoln was introduced to Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, the diminutive Maine housewife, he exclaimed: "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."<sup>1</sup> The Chief Executive was referring to her famous novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which had swept the country like wildfire, stirring up sectional hatred and national disunity and which, as many people both North and South believed, had exerted tremendous influence in bringing about the great American conflict.

Harriet Beecher, the seventh child of the Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher, a distinguished Calvinistic divine and Roxana Foote, his first wife, was born on June 14, 1811, in the typical New England town of Litchfield, Connecticut. Three brothers and three sisters made up the Beecher household when Harriet arrived and when she had reached the age of four her mother died "which afterwards remained with her as her tenderest, saddest and most sacred memory of her childhood."<sup>2</sup>

Having a large brood of young children to care for must have proven a difficult task for the widowed father, and so two years later, when Harriet was six, he married, as his second wife, Miss Harriet Porter, of Portland, Maine. The second Mrs. Beecher, like the first, was a woman of strong religious beliefs. The new mother proved to be indeed all that the name implies to her husband's children "and never did they have occasion to call her aught other than blessed."<sup>3</sup>

In the Beecher household the children were brought up in an atmosphere of refinement, literature and a rigid New England Puritanism. After a few years schooling at

the Litchfield Academy, Harriet when about twelve years old was sent to Hartford to pursue her studies in a school recently established there by her elder sister Catherine, a versatile and gifted young lady. This was the formative period in her life and here she learned many of the good traits of character and forms of literature which she found so useful in latter-day life. To Catherine in a large degree is due the credit for molding and shaping the sensitive, dreamy and poetic nature of her younger sister. Harriet herself in later years said that the two persons who influenced her most at this period were her brother Edward and her sister Catherine.

Having been raised in the home of a gifted minister of the gospel, it is only natural that Harriet should at an early age profess a great interest in the church, and when only fourteen years of age, in the autumn of 1825, she became a member of the First Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut.<sup>4</sup> From then on her thoughts and actions were of a deeply religious nature and at times her condition became morbid. Finally it was evident that something should be done to restore young Harriet to a more tranquil and healthful frame of mind, so much so, that in the summer of 1827 she was sent to visit with her grandmother Foote, at Nut Plains, in Guilford, where it was hoped a change of scenery would improve her mental condition.

After serving several years as pastor of the Hanover Street Church, in Boston, Dr. Beecher in 1832, received and accepted an urgent call to become President of Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati. It was hard for this New England family to sever the ties of a lifetime and to enter on so long a journey to the far distant West of those days, but be-



Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, from a photograph taken about 1858.

ing fully persuaded that their duty lay in this direction, they undertook to perform it cheerfully and willingly. Along with Dr. Beecher and his wife, came their daughter Catherine who conceived the plan of founding in that city a female college, and Harriet her sister was to act as her principal assistant.<sup>5</sup> Upon their arrival in Cincinnati, the Beecher family set up housekeeping in a large two-story brick house in the Walnut Hills section of the town.

During this early life in Cincinnati Harriet Beecher "suffered much from ill health accompanied by great mental depression,"<sup>6</sup> but in spite of both she labored diligently with her sister Catherine in establishing their school, the Western Female Institute, and proposed to conduct it along the lines of a regular college, with a faculty of instructors.

While thus engaged in teaching, Miss Beecher during her spare time, turned her attention to the composition of various literary pieces and was greatly stimulated when she won a prize of fifty dollars offered by Judge James Hall, of Cincinnati, editor of the *Western Monthly* magazine. Her story,

"Uncle Lot" was by far the best submitted. This early success in writing gave a new impetus to her thoughts and an insight into her own ability which so encouraged her that from then on she devoted most of her time to literary efforts.

In the mid-winter of 1836, Miss Harriet Beecher, after a short engagement became the wife of Professor Calvin E. Stowe, a childless widower and member of the faculty of the Lane Theological Seminary, in Cincinnati. Three months later in describing their married life, she wrote: "My husband and self are now quietly seated by our own fire-side, as domestic as any pair of tame fowl you ever saw; he writing to his mother, and I to you." In the following summer Professor Stowe went to Europe to purchase books for Lane Seminary and also as a commissioner appointed by the state of Ohio to investigate the public school systems of the Old World.

During her husband's absence abroad Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe lived quietly in Cincinnati with her father and brothers. Occasionally she wrote articles, short stories and essays for publication in the *Western Monthly* magazine or the *New York Evangelist*, and also assisted her brother, Henry Ward, who occupied a temporary position as editor of the *Journal*, a small daily paper recently established in the city.

About this period the question of slavery was becoming an exciting issue in Cincinnati and the Lane Seminary had become an abolition hotbed. This movement among the students was headed by Theodore D. Weld, one of their number, who had just returned from a lecture tour through the South, where he collected materials for his book<sup>7</sup> and likewise had gained enough funds to complete his education. On his southern lecture, Weld had become so convinced of the iniquity of the "peculiar institution" that he soon became a rabid abolitionist and succeeded in converting several prominent Southerners to his cause.

Prominent among Weld's converts was James G. Birney, of Huntsville, Alabama, who, having liberated all his slaves, moved



back to the Bluegrass State and attempted to set up an anti-slavery newspaper, *The Philanthropist*, in Danville, Kentucky. After being run out of this city by the irate slaveholders, Mr. Birney in 1836 moved to Cincinnati and here, in connection with Dr. Gamaliel Bailey, again set up *The Philanthropist*, which after a short period of operation was attacked and destroyed by a mob instigated by Kentucky slaveholders.<sup>8</sup>

"For my part, I can easily see how such proceedings may make converts to abolitionism," wrote Mrs. Stowe to a friend back East, "for already my sympathies are strongly enlisted for Mr. Birney, and I hope that he will stand his ground and assert his rights."<sup>9</sup> However, Mrs. Stowe's good wishes were not to be realized, for on Mr. Birney's second attempt to operate his anti-slavery press, he was again attacked, his house ransacked by the howling mob "which wrecked the presses, dragged the forms and type through the streets of the city and flung them into the river."

For the next few years life in Walnut Hills, Cincinnati was very trying for the young authoress and anti-slavery advocate, as poverty and illness stalked their household which now consisted of five young children. At odd moments Mrs. Stowe tried to turn out some literary work but complained that it was almost impossible to do so and to care for the children. In January, 1846, her sixth child, Samuel Charles was born and about this time Professor Stowe's health became so impaired that he was forced to give up teaching at the Lane Seminary and spend a season at the "Brattleboro [Vermont] water cure."

Mrs. Stowe's husband remained away at the water cure until the latter part of September, 1849. During his absence of more than a year she remained in Cincinnati taking care of her six children, eking out a slender income by taking in boarders and writing when she found time, and confronting a terrible cholera plague in the summer of 1849 which carried off one of her little flock, the infant boy, Charlie.

Late in the fall of that year, when the

dreaded epidemic had subsided Professor Stowe returned to Cincinnati from Brattleboro, and about this time he received and accepted a call to the Collins Professorship at Bowdoin College, his old alma mater, in Brunswick, Maine.

By the time the Stowe family had moved to Brunswick and settled down to housekeeping in that Maine city, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 had been passed and its efforts were being felt far and wide throughout the North. Even staid old Boston and Philadelphia, the very cradle of American liberty, opened their doors to the slave hunters and slave catchers. This law, one of the five passed by Congress in the celebrated Compromise of 1850, provided that slave owners could go into free territory, claim and seize their fugitive slaves and bring them back into bondage.<sup>10</sup>

Notwithstanding the kindly disposition shown in many parts of the free states to protect slave settlers, this new law of 1850 spread consternation and distress among these Negroes, causing many to leave the little homes they had established for themselves and renew their search for liberty farther northward, often in Canada. This law wrung from the escaped slaves a cry of anguish that voiced the distress of the people of this class in all quarters, especially in the free states along the Ohio River. Even legally free Negroes in the northern states had good reason to fear for their safety, as under the new law, the fugitive, or anyone accused of being a fugitive, was denied the right of trial by jury and his status was determined either by a United States judge or some Federal commissioner. This act, moreover, was retroactive or *ex post facto*, for its provisions applied to slaves who had fled from their masters at any time in the past, and it contained what amounted to a virtual bribe, for, if the commissioner decided in favor of the master, his fee was ten dollars, whereas, if his finding was for the fugitive, it was only five dollars.<sup>11</sup>

Numerous instances were daily recorded in the northern press where fugitives thus seized

were persons who had escaped from bondage years before, had married, acquired homes and were rearing families on free soil in peace and contentment. The *Anti-Slavery Bugle* was loud in its complaint that many free Negroes from Ohio and other northern states "were seized from their own firesides" by "those biped Kentucky bloodhounds" and carried back to slavery.<sup>12</sup>

Many letters were received by Mrs. Stowe in Brunswick from Mrs. Edward Beecher and other friends, describing the heart-rending scenes which were the inevitable results of the enforcement of this "slave-catching" law. The anguish and sorrow caused therefrom would be difficult to describe; families were broken up and hauled away; many hid in cellars and garrets; others fled to wharves and embarked in ships for Europe and other places. Many fled to Canada.

No doubt it was the heart-rending stories and events associated with the Fugitive Slave Law that inspired Mrs. Stowe to write her

great anti-slavery novel. These incidents and stories she heard from fleeing slaves whom she had met and interviewed first hand while living in Cincinnati just across the river from slave territory, together with other slave observations and narratives gathered while on her visits to Kentucky formed the basis for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, America's most famous book.

While living in Cincinnati, Mrs. Stowe first had the subject of slavery brought to her personal notice by taking several trips across the Ohio River into Kentucky in company with Miss Mary Dutton, one of the associate teachers at the Western Female Institute. Among the Kentucky places visited by this New England novelist were the Spillman home in Paint Lick, the Marshall Key home in Washington, then the county seat of Mason County and the large plantation of General Thomas Kennedy, a Virginian who came to the Bluegrass State in 1780 to take up his land claim for seven thousand acres

*The Marshall Key House at Washington, Ky., as it looks today.*

—Photo by J. Winston Coleman, Jr.





of the rich soil in what is now Garrard County.

Mrs. Stowe's biographers do not agree as to the place in Kentucky where she obtained the most information on the manners and customs of slavery. However, it is more likely that she gained a better idea of the institution while visiting with the Kennedy family, as they were reputed to be the owners of some one hundred and fifty to two hundred slaves. This plantation, with its large two-story brick manor house was situated a short distance from the village of Paint Lick, and was one of the largest slave-operated plantations in Kentucky.

Miss Dutton, in speaking of their visit to the Kennedy plantation, said: "Harriet did not seem to notice anything in particular that happened, but sat much of the time as though abstracted in thought. When the Negroes did funny things and cut up capers she did not seem to pay the slightest attention to them." Years later, in retrospect she wrote: "I recognized scene after scene of that visit portrayed with the most minute fidelity, and knew at once where the material for that portion of the story had been gathered."<sup>13</sup>

As Mrs. Stowe was brought into intimate contact with Kentucky slavery on the Kennedy Plantation, it was only natural that the opening scene of her famous book should be laid there. Most of the characters of her novel have been identified: Thomas Kennedy, Jr., and his wife, Mary Bohannon, were Colonel and Mrs. Shelby, the kind and indulgent master and mistress; Little Eva was their daughter Nancy; Lewis, a light colored mulatto was George Harris and his sister Delia was Emmiline, who were slaves on the Kennedy Plantation along with Aunt Chloe, Eliza and others. General Kennedy does not appear as a character in the book. Samuel and Rachel Halliday were Mr. and Mrs. Levi Coffin, prominent Underground Railroad agents of Cincinnati; John Van Troupe was John Van Zandt, likewise an Underground Railroad agent of southern Ohio.<sup>14</sup>

The character of Uncle Tom, the central figure of the book has been a matter of some speculation and much conjecture and has

often been erroneously attributed to Josiah Henson, an escaped slave from Daviess County, Kentucky, who toured Europe in the middle and late eighteen-fifties and passed himself off as the original Uncle Tom. This famous character, as the author herself stated years later, was a composite picture of several old and faithful slaves whom she had known and interviewed, including "father" Henson.<sup>15</sup> In a letter written to the editor of the *Indianapolis News*, July 27, 1882, in response to the question of Uncle Tom's identity, Mrs. Stowe set at rest forever the long-disputed subject, when she wrote: "I will say that the character of Uncle Tom was not the biography of any one man."<sup>16</sup>

General Kennedy died in 1836, and left the bulk of his estate to his son Thomas, then about twenty years old. In three years young Kennedy had squandered more than a good-sized fortune and was dead at the very outset of his career. When his estate came to be settled, it was found that some of the slaves must be sold, and it was decided to sell Lewis [Clarke] and some of the others. Word passed down to the slave quarters that several of the Negroes were going to be "sold South," and Lewis, an intelligent high-strung octoroon boy, mounted his pony one dark night in September, 1841, and struck out for Ohio and Canada.<sup>17</sup>

This fugitive Kentucky slave from the Kennedy Plantation made his way to Cambridge, Massachusetts and lived there for seven years with A. H. Safford, a brother-in-law of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. As Mrs. Stowe visited her relatives each summer she took a deep interest in Lewis Clarke, and took full notes of all he told her, of his slave life in Kentucky,<sup>18</sup> and of the horrors which made the slave system possible. These stories and other information gleaned elsewhere Mrs. Stowe used to paint in the liveliest colors of fiction a lurid and grossly exaggerated picture of the horrors of slavery in the United States which stirred the reader's passions from their innermost depths and plumbed the abyss of human sentiment. This "monstrous caricature," the greatest propaganda novel ever written, instantly provoked an outbreak of furious in-

dignation, which greatly weakened the abolitionist cause in Kentucky and in the South, where the book's unpopularity was matched only by its popularity in the North.

Forty years after the runaway slave Lewis Clarke made his bold dash for liberty, he returned again to the old Kennedy Plantation in Kentucky and to the scene of his former bondage.<sup>19</sup> Here, in the summer of 1881, this erstwhile slave, now a well-known Baptist preacher, was interviewed by Young E. Allison, a prominent newspaper man of Louisville, who gathered from Clarke's own lips the story of Mrs. Stowe's visit to the old plantation and how she came to write *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

According to Clarke's story,<sup>20</sup> Dr. Gamaliel

Bailey who published *The Philanthropist* in Cincinnati and whose presses were wrecked there in 1836, had moved to Washington, D. C., in about 1848 or 1849 and there established an emancipationist organ, the *National Era*. When the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 was passed it produced such an impression upon the country, and was so stoutly sustained by both the press and the pulpit, that the emancipationists were paralyzed for some time. The *National Era* steadily lost circulation and was on the point of extinction when Dr. Bailey went to New York to consult some leading anti-slavery advocate as to what course he should pursue. He believed that, if he could find some woman of literary talents to write a series of articles, one each week, on

*The Old Kennedy Plantation House, Garrard County, Ky., where Mrs. Stowe gathered some of the material for her books. (The house has been torn down.)*





the subject of slavery and its iniquities, his paper would be revived and it would attract public interest in a group of people never before reached.

Several names were suggested, including Mrs. Lydia M. Child and others, but none chosen. Then Lewis Tappan, a leading anti-slavery worker of the East, proposed the name of Mrs. Stowe, of Brunswick, Maine, who he said was poor and would have to be paid for her work, but, that she was gifted and capable of succeeding at the task. Following up Tappan's suggestion Dr. Bailey wrote to Mrs. Stowe and enclosed a draft for one hundred dollars.<sup>21</sup>

The very next week, on June 5, 1851, appeared in the columns of the *National Era*, not the first of a series of articles on slavery, but the first chapters of a story called *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which was announced to run for about three months, but was not completed in that paper until April 1, 1852. The effect was instantaneous and great.

Mrs. Stowe's story had been contemplated as a mere magazine tale of perhaps a dozen chapters, but once begun "it could no more be controlled than the waters of the swollen Mississippi, bursting through a crevasse in its levees."<sup>22</sup> The little authoress sometimes found herself pressed for time to meet Bailey's deadlines, as she was writing each installment from her home in Brunswick, Maine, in addition to teaching school. Sometimes she would try out a chapter or two on her school children before turning them over to the *National Era* for publication. As the story of *Uncle Tom* ran through the issues of Bailey's paper it created intense interest which of itself increased the demands made upon the writer for additional material. With words of encouragement coming in from many sides, together with the author's ever-growing conviction that she had been intrusted with a great and holy mission, Mrs. Stowe felt compelled to keep on with her humble story until it had assumed the proportions of a volume prepared to stand among the greatest books of the world. For the story as a serial the author received the sum of \$300.

Before the serial had run its length, it attracted the attention of John P. Jewett, a Boston publisher, who promptly made overtures for its publication in book form, offering Professor and Mrs. Stowe half a share in the future profits provided they would share equally the expenses of publication. Refusing this offer on the grounds that they were too poor to chance any such risk, a deal was then made whereby the author was to receive a ten per cent royalty upon all sales of the book.

By agreement with the editor of the *National Era*, the book publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was authorized to begin before its completion as a serial, and the first edition of 5,000 copies was issued on the 20th of March, 1852. Three thousand copies were sold the first day, a second edition was issued the following week, a third the first of April, and within a year over three hundred thousand copies of the book had been printed in this country. Eight power presses running day and night were barely able to keep pace with the great demand for it.<sup>23</sup>

Almost overnight the poor professor's wife had become the most talked-of woman in the world, and the long, weary struggle of poverty was to be hers no longer, for, in seeking to aid the oppressed she had so aided herself that, within four months from the time of publication of her book, it had yielded her \$10,000 in royalties.

Throughout the North Mrs. Stowe's American novel was received with great praise and acclaim; it crystallized the anti-slavery sentiment of the people and provided the abolitionists with a most effective weapon. In the South, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the subject of many attacks and scathing criticism, through the southern press and from numerous well-known and prosperous planters who openly accused the Maine authoress of making ignorant and malicious misrepresentations and further that the book was nothing short of a pack of lies and falsehoods.

To refute such charges, Mrs. Stowe the following year (1853) compiled her *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*<sup>24</sup> which was made up

of newspaper advertisements, documents, anecdotes and records upon which the author stated her story had been built. In this Key are a number of references to Kentucky slavery, all chosen from the anti-slavery viewpoint with the idea of accentuating the darker side of African bondage, but all quite obviously true.

Throughout her life, Harriet Beecher Stowe was extremely religious. She related that the story of Uncle Tom came to her in a vision and that the Lord had inspired her to write that which would bring about a great reform and strike the fetters from the enslaved race. Believing that she was divinely inspired, she once wrote this lofty sentiment on the fly-leaf of one of her books to be presented to a friend: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives . . . and to set at liberty those that are bruised . . ."

There were numerous long-forgotten and now out of print efforts to belittle Mrs. Stowe and to show slavery in its most favorable light. Two of these which probably had the largest circulation, especially in the South, were *Uncle Tom's Cabin as It Is* by W. L. G. Smith and *The Cabin and the Parlor* by J. T. Randolph, printed, strangely enough, in Buffalo and Philadelphia respectively! These works, like perhaps a dozen others, painted a picture of slavery that must have been very heartening to the slave owner and which portrayed Uncle Tom as a happy, contented and charming old fellow, who was quite content with his lot in bondage and wanted no more freedom than his owners allowed him!

After the Civil War Mrs. Stowe bought a plantation at Mandarin, Florida, with a vague idea of helping the emancipated Negroes who were pouring into that state and incidently to help one of her sons who had been wounded at Gettysburg to establish a business. The venture failed, but Mrs. Stowe was able to live comfortably there and at Hartford, Connecticut, for the rest of her life

on the proceeds of her literary work which she continued to produce, in such abundance that her collected works eventually filled sixteen volumes.

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of this famous novel and a great many more of lesser-known calibre, the mother of seven children and the wife of Professor Stowe lived to the ripe old age of eighty-five years, dying in Hartford, Connecticut on the evening of July 1, 1896.<sup>25</sup> She was buried two days later in the Andover (Massachusetts) Chapel cemetery between the graves of her husband and son. On the casket was a wreath presented by Negroes of Boston. It bore a card: "The Children of Uncle Tom."

Despite the many criticisms and vitrolric attacks which have been hurled against the immortal book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* during its ninety-four years of existence, it has stood up well and is today considered a very readable and popular novel. If influence for doing good and the awakening of a national conscience to the evils of slavery, plus the demand for millions of copies from almost every corner of the earth, marks a great writer, then Harriet Beecher Stowe holds a unique place in our literature, and is, perhaps, America's greatest woman author.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln; The War Years*, (New York, 1939), Vol. 11, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Edward Stowe, *Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, (Boston and New York, 1889), p. 2. This biography is by Mrs. Stowe's son.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Forrest Wilson, *Crusader in Crinoline*, (Philadelphia, New York, 1941), p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> Stowe, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>6</sup> Stowe, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

<sup>7</sup> Theodore D. Weld, *American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses*, (New York, 1839). These are a collection of slave incidents and slave cases to show the darker side of American slavery.

<sup>8</sup> Stowe, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>9</sup> Stowe, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>10</sup> J. Winston Coleman, Jr. *Slavery Times in Kentucky*, (Chapel Hill, 1940), p. 207.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in *The Liberator*, December 2, 1852.

<sup>13</sup> Annie Fields, editor, *Life & Letters of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, (Boston and New York, 1898), pp. 84-85.

<sup>14</sup> Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 319n.

<sup>15</sup> Josiah Henson, *Father Henson's Story of His Own Life*, (Boston, 1858), see chapters XX to XXIV.

<sup>16</sup> Copy in the author's collection.



<sup>17</sup> Anna Burnside Brown, "Where Uncle Tom's Cabin Stood" in *Kentucky Progress Magazine*, (September, 1930), p. 20.

<sup>18</sup> Lewis Clarke, *Narrative of the Sufferings of Lewis Clarke, during a Captivity of more than Twenty-Five Years among the Algerines of Kentucky, one of the so called Christian States of North America*. (Boston, 1845). This rare pamphlet contains numerous references to Kentucky slavery.

<sup>19</sup> Lewis and Milton Clarke, *Narratives of the Sufferings of Lewis and Milton Clarke, Sons of a Soldier of the Revolution, during a Captivity of more than Twenty Years among the Slaveholders of Kentucky*. (Boston, 1846.) This is a revised edition, with notes by Milton Clarke.

<sup>20</sup> Young E. Allison, "Cradle of Uncle Tom's Cabin" in *The Courier-Journal*, (Louisville, Ky.),

May 16, 1881.

<sup>21</sup> Catherine Gilbertson, *Harriet Beecher Stowe*, (New York, London, 1937), p. 140.

<sup>22</sup> Stowe, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

<sup>23</sup> Fields, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

<sup>24</sup> Harriet Beecher Stowe, *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, (Boston, 1853). Also a London edition, 1853. These editions have different formats.

<sup>25</sup> Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 639.

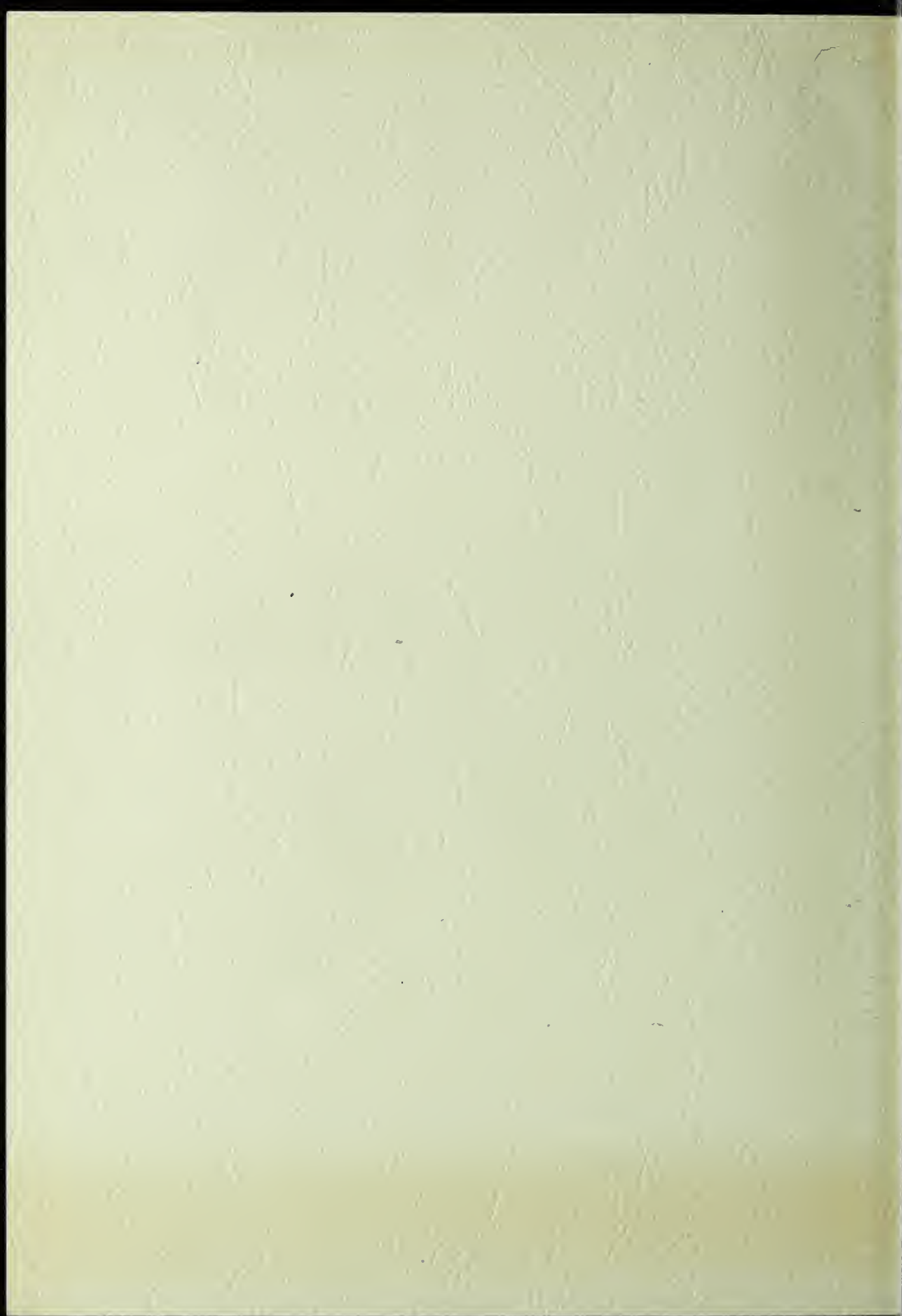
*Editor's Note:* Dr. J. Winston Coleman, Jr. author of the accompanying article has made a special study of the history of slavery in Kentucky. He is the author of *Slavery Times in Kentucky*, and numerous articles for historical publications. He is a frequent contributor to the *Lincoln Herald*, and in 1945 was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature by the University.















The New York Times/Jose R. Lopez

Uncle Tom's Cabin, which is now a wood-paneled den attached to a house in Rockville, Md.

## Rockville Journal

*NY Times 12/7/87*

# Visit to the Real Uncle Tom's Cabin

By MAUREEN DOWD  
Special to The New York Times

ROCKVILLE, Md., Dec. 4 — It is not one of the capital's famous monuments. There are no tour buses passing by or marble statues to mark the spot.

Only a few history buffs know that here, hidden behind the pines and maples that line the highway in this Washington suburb, sits Uncle Tom's cabin, the Uncle Tom's cabin.

Josiah Henson, a slave who spent 30 years on a plantation owned by Isaac Riley in Montgomery County, Md., before he escaped to Canada and became a Methodist preacher, author, lecturer and businessman, was the main inspiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe's celebrated character.

Hoping to earn enough money to buy a silk dress, Mrs. Stowe wrote 40 serials for "The National Era," an anti-slavery newspaper in Washington. The articles became "Uncle Tom's Cabin or Life Among the Lowly," the 1852 novel that goaded the North and enraged the South so much that, when President Lincoln met the author, he remarked: "So this is the little woman who wrote the book that made this big war."

To rebut the cyclone of criticism the book caused, Mrs. Stowe collected documents to substantiate her characters in "A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin." She cited Henson's memoirs, published in 1849, as her source for Uncle Tom.

The 500-acre Riley plantation is now dotted with suburban homes, and the small log cabin where the slaves once slept on straw and rags is now a wood-paneled den attached to the frame house of Marcel and Hildegarde Mallet-Prevost.

Mr. Mallet-Prevost, a Washington lawyer in semi-retirement, keeps a fire blazing in the room as he works on legal projects. Restored during the 1920's by the White House architect, Lorenzo Winslow, the sleeping lofts

## A suburb now surrounds the home of the man behind the novel.

are plastered over and the cabin has been spruced up with Currier & Ives lithographs, antiques and a wooden floor.

The Mallet-Prevosts like to keep their small slice of history private. "I don't want tour groups traipsing through the house thinking, 'When did she wash those curtains last?'" Mrs. Mallet-Prevost said.

But they have a keen sense of the cabin's special past, and sometimes they imagine they can smell the aroma of the hams, corn bread and biscuits the slaves once cooked for the Rileys' dinner in the wide stone fireplace.

The young Josiah Henson was deeply religious, and Mrs. Stowe used his qualities of forbearance and dignity for Uncle Tom. As a spiritual leader among the Maryland slaves, he once quieted a rebellion of 400 slaves who wanted to set houses on fire and slaughter their masters.

He recalled in his memoirs that as a teen-ager, he had longed to learn to read. Selling apples he found on the ground of the orchard, he got the 11 cents he needed to buy a Webster's spelling book. Using charcoal, he traced his first letters in the ground — "Isaac Riley," the name of his master.

But when the speller fell out of the boy's hat one day and Mr. Riley discovered how he had gotten it, he became furious and caned the slave until the boy's eyes swelled. The young man went on to become plantation overseer but did not learn to read until he was 42 years old, when his son taught him.

Far from being an Uncle Tom in the modern sense of the word, "Sie" Henson was a leading spirit in the abolitionist movement. Following his escape to Canada in 1830, he returned to this country — despite the bounty on his head — and plotted bold escapes for 118 slaves.

He became leader of a cooperative colony of former slaves in Canada, where he started a manual school and ran a grist mill for the fledgling farmers.

Henson published three sets of memoirs and became famous and well heeled — noting with satisfaction that he dressed better than his former master.

On a trip to England, he was received by Queen Victoria and the Archbishop of Canterbury. When the Archbishop asked where he had been educated, he replied: "I graduated, your grace, from the University of Adversity."

He was proud of being Uncle Tom. "If my humble words in any way inspired that gifted lady to write such a plaintive story that the whole community has been touched with pity for the sufferings of the poor slave, then I have not lived in vain," he wrote. "It was a wedge that finally rent asunder the gigantic fabric with a fearful crash."

In 1878, 50 years after his escape and several years before he died at 94, Henson returned to Washington and was invited to the White House by President Rutherford B. Hayes.

He visited the Riley plantation and found the cornfields overgrown, the fruit trees dead, the house dilapidated and his former master's wife "a poor, fretful invalid of 70."

Mathilda Riley did not recognize the distinguished black man and demanded to feel his arms, which had been broken by a neighbor's gang after he had defended her husband in a barroom brawl.

"Why, Sie, you are a gentleman," Mrs. Riley marveled.

"I always was, madam," he replied.

**HARRIET BEECHER STOWE**  
(1811-1896)

Author of "the book that made this great war"

When President Lincoln met Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1863, he is reported to have said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war!"

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* may not have caused the Civil War, but it shook both North and South. Susan Bradford wrote, after her state of Florida seceded, "If Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe



had died before she wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, this would never have happened. . . . Isn't it strange how much harm a pack of lies can do?"

Harriet was the seventh of twelve children of Lyman Beecher, the noted revivalist and reformer. In 1832 her father moved the family to the frontier city of Cincinnati, where he became president of Lane Seminary, soon a center for abolitionists. At 25, Harriet married Calvin Ellis Stowe, professor of biblical literature at Lane.

During her child-rearing years, she

17

ISSUE 33

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read to her seven children two hours each evening and for a time, ran a small school in her home. She described herself as "a mere drudge with few ideas beyond babies and house-keeping."

But a mere drudge she was not. She found time to write, partially to bolster the meager family income. An early literary success (a collection of short stories) at age 32 encouraged her, but she still worried about the conflict between writing and mothering. Her husband, however, urged her on, predicting she could mold "the mind of the West for the coming generation."

That she did with the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* at age 40. Her only exposure to slavery had been a short visit to Kentucky, but Stowe was deeply disturbed by the Fugitive Slave Act (severe measures passed the year before that mandated the return of runaway slaves without trial). She brooded over how she could respond. Then, during a church Communion service, the scene of the triumphant death of Tom flashed before her.

She soon formed the story that preceded Tom's death. The novel was serialized in the abolitionist newspaper *National Era* in 1851 and 1852 in forty installments, each with a cliffhanger ending. When it appeared in book form in 1852, it sold 10,000 copies the first week and 300,000 the first year. It sold 1,000,000 copies before the Civil War.

Its publication also inspired a reaction from the South: critical reviews and the publication of some thirty anti-abolitionist *Uncle Tom* novels within three years.

By literary standards, the novel's situations are contrived, the dialogue unreal, and the slaves romanticized. Still, Stowe grasped and communicated the tragedy of slavery. She had the wisdom to pin the blame on the institution, rather than southern men and women, who she felt were merely caught in its claws.

Until her death in July 1896, Stowe averaged nearly a book a year, but *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was her legacy. Even one of her harshest critics acknowledged that it was "perhaps the most influential novel ever published . . . a verbal earthquake, an ink-and-paper tidal wave."

18



### HARRIET BEECHER STOWE: A Life

By Joan D. Hedrick. Oxford University, \$15.95.

When Abraham Lincoln was introduced to the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," he is said to have remarked, "So



Harriet Beecher  
Stowe.

you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war!" Harriet Beecher Stowe was indeed short — less than 5 feet — but she had a moral strength and intellectual talent that went beyond the sentimental piety of her most famous novel. Last year our reviewer, E. L. Doctorow, called this Pulitzer Prize-winning biography "a classic ... engrossing, capacious, definitive and

never straying too far from its sources." The emancipation of American slaves was a Beecher family cause, explored in **THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction**, by James M. McPherson (Princeton University, \$14.95). The author demonstrates that the abolitionists, who supported civil rights for blacks out of conviction rather than expediency (they considered Lincoln too timid), achieved more than is usually thought. This is an "excellent book," C. Vann Woodward said in these pages in 1965, with "something new and vital and relevant to say." Princeton has also restored to print **THE ABOLITIONIST LEGACY: From Reconstruction to the NAACP** (\$14.95), Mr. McPherson's study of the movement's descendants. In 1976 one critic found it "carefully conceived, thoughtfully argued and well written."

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